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LIFE IN RUPERT'S LAND.

In the Olden Time.

By JAMES STEWART.

Looking backwards over a period of fifty years and upwards, one cannot help moralising upon the varied and chequered career one has to pass through in his earthly pilgrimage. Standing as I feel myself to be, upon the shore of the unseen world and musing on the past, the words of Solomon come with a force to my mind which at an earlier period of my life have passed unheeded, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Human life appears to me as a strange mixture of chances and changes, of ups and downs, of joys and sorrows, and although sometimes our feet may tread in pleasant paths, yet it must be confessed that reverses and disappointments reign predominant. Our lives as a rule run contrary to our plans and aspirations. In youth we may meditate and plan and picture to ourselves the path of life we intend to pursue, but very often it is all in vain. Our destiny is marked out for us in the book of fate and in spite of all we can do we cannot deviate an hair-breadth from the lines laid down. I do not think that this is the fault of any person in particular. All our tortuous wanderings through life, and all our destiny, whatever it may be is, I think, clearly to be attributed to our surroundings. It is not our fault, very often, that our destiny is different from our plannings; it is the circumstances which beset our path through life that forces us into a course which we had never dreamed of. In our youth when the morning of life is breaking in upon us everything seems to have a rosy appearance and we delight to picture to ourselves a brilliant future leading on to fame and fortune. But, alas! on entering into the arena of life and meeting with the difficulties and trials which are the inevitable lot of man to encounter, these visionary dreams of youth are dissipated one by one and gradually the stern struggles of life take their place and stare us in the face with vivid reality and the smooth path we had pictured to ourselves is supplanted by trials and sorrows of which we had not the remotest anticipation. But such is life, whatever the young mind may propose, is generally frustrated by the iron hand of fate. The circumstances of our surroundings force us into grooves different from the dreams of youth. But there is no reason why we should rebel against the wise dispensation of Providence. Our path through this

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world may not be to our liking or different from our aspirations, yet there is no doubt but that it is the best after all. Our Maker disposes of us as he pleases, and it is certainly His right to do so, but on the other hand it is our duty to make the best of the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed; trusting that all will be well in the end, and that at the close of an eventful career we may look back and consider all the way in which our Father in heaven has led us, and gratefully confess that all is well,

In my early life I had not the remotest idea that I was ever to behold the trackless forests of North America, or participate in all the joys and sorrows, the fatigues and adventures incident thereto. My thoughts and my aspirations of youth lay in a totally different direction, for was not I, as well as most of my fellow countrymen, bred to the sea and hailed with delight the thought that I should one day have the command of a ship This was the sum total of my ambition. And there was every chance that my wishes would be gratified. I had served my time to the profession and was already a full fledged able seamen. I stood high in the estimation of my superiors and, as I thought, had a brilliant future before me Most of my uncles were ship captains and why should not I be one. But man proposes, and God disposes. The 10th day of October 1850 was the turning point in my history, but I knew it not at the time. On that day I was on the good ship Canova, of Sunderland, England, and was returning from a voyage to Flushing, in Belgium. My good friend Captain Sharpe who was also owner of the vessel, called me down into the cabin and addressed me as follows, "Now James," said he, "you have served your apprenticeship, which time expired six months ago. Now I intend to lay up the Canova for the winter and go out into the Mediterranean trade in the spring. My wish is, however, to keep you with me; you can stay at my house all winter free of cost, and go to college and perfect yourself in the mathematics and navigation, as I wish you to come with me as first officer in the spring." I thanked him kindly, but at the same time told him that I had decided to go home to the Orkney Islands, my birthplace, and stay for the winter and see my friends, whom I had not seen for some time, and as for learning navigation I could learn it there just as well under my old school master. Captain Sharpe tried to argue the matter with me and used every means to reconsider my decision, but nothing could dissuade me from my purpose. I, however, promised the Captain that if spared I would certainly return in the spring and join his ship. This was the turning point in my life. I went home as I had intended and went to the academy to learn navigation but I found that an absence of five years had worked wonderful changes in the home of my childhood. Most of my schoolmates had gone; some to sea, some to Australia, and other distant places, while grim death had taken away many dear friends. The consequence was that I became uneasy and restless, the charm of home life had departed, and I longed to be again upon the stormy deep or travelling to some distant land. It was while in this state of mind that two of my early acquaintances had engaged to enter the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America. Now this was a line of life that I was totally ignorant of. I had heard of the Nor'-West,

as it was called, but knew nothing whatever regarding the object of the work of the Hudson's Bay Company there All I understood about it was that the country was noted for excessive cold and trackless forests, a country abounding in wild beasts of every description and, still wilder Indians; in fact it was just the country fitted for an adventurous spirit. My two friends earnestly advised me to enter the service also, and then we would enjoy life in its most adventurous and profitable form. The glowing descriptions these two young worthies gave me of the country impressed me favorably, in consequence of which I went to Stromness to interview the Company's agent regarding the matter. He gave me a florid description of the Company's service and strongly advised me to go to North America with their ships in June. The result was that I engaged there and then. The contract that I signed was binding enough in all conscience, and as a copy of it might prove interesting I will cause it to appear in my next paper.

Here then the die was cast. The idea of following the sea as a professi n was abandoned, and I was bound to go to North America, to me an unknown and almost an unheard of country. I was henceforth to follow a different pursuit from my hitherto accustomed occupation. The ocean which I loved so much and which I had never lost sight of one day of my life, was to be abandoned, and I was to enter on new scenes which I had never dreamed of in all my ranges of thought. I had bound myself by an agreement which at the time I thought pretty stiff, being a great deal more stringent and exacting than the articles of a ship. As this agreement may be of interest, according to notice in my last paper, I here produce it.

AN AGREEMENT made this nineteenth day day of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and fifty.

BETWEEN James Stewart in the parish of Burray and South Ronaldshay, in the County of Orkney and Shetland in North Britain, of the one part and the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading in to Hudson's Bay, by Edward Clouston, residing in Stromness, their agent, of the other part as follows:—

The said James Stewart hereby contracts and agrees to enter into the service and employment of the said Company in North America in the capacity of Labourer, and that he wi l embark when thereunto required on board such Ship or Vessel as shall be appointed by or on behalf of said Company and proceed to Hudson's Bay, and for the Term of Five Years, to be computed from the time of embarkation, and for such time as hereinafter mentioned, and faithfully serve the said Company in the capacity of Labourer, and devote the whole of his time and labour in their service and for their sole benefit,, and that he will do his duty as such and perform all such work and service by day or by night for the said Company as he shall be required to do, and obey all the orders which he shall receive from the Governors of the Company in North America, or other their officers or Agents for the time being. And that he will with courage and fidelity on his said station, in the said service defend the property of the said Company and their Factories and Territories, and will not absent himself from the said service, nor engage or be concerned in any trade or employment whatsoever except for the benefit of the said company and according to their orders. And that all Goods obtained by bar ter with the Indians, or otherwise which shall come to the hands or possession of the said James Stewart shall be held by him for the said Company only, and shall be duly delivered up to the said Governor or other officers at their Factory or Trading Post, without any waste, spoil or injury thereto. And in case of any wilful neglect herein he shall make good to the said Company all such loss or da.nage as they shall sustain thereby, to be deducted out of his wages. And that the

said James Stewart shall faithfully obey all Laws, orders and regulations established or made by the said Company for the Good Government of their Settlements and Territories. And at all times during the residence of the said James Stewart in North America he will defend the rights and privileges of the said Company, and aid and support their Officers and Agents to the utmost of his power. And the said James Stewart further engages and agrees that in case he shall omit to give notice to the Governor or Officers of the said Company in North America one year or upwards before the expiration of the said term Five Years of his intention to quit their service and return to Europe then that he hereby promises and engages to remain one year longer, and also until the next Ship in the service of the said Company shall sail from thence to Europe, as their hired servant in North America upon the like terms as are contained in this Contract. And the said James Stewart further engages and agrees that in case the said Company shall not have any Ship which will sail from North America for Europe immediately after the expiration of the said term of Five Years or such further term as hereinafter mentioned then he hereby promises and engages to remain in the service as a hired servant of the said Company in North America until the next Ship of the said Company or some Ship provided by them shall sail from thence to Europe upon the like terms as are contained in this Contract. Provided always that the said James Stewart further agrees to keep watch and ward and perform such other work in the Navigation of the Ships of the said Company in which he shall be embarked on the outward and homeward Voyage as he shall be required to do by the Commanding Officer. And the said Edward Clouston on behalf of the said Company hereby engages that upon condition of the due and faithful service of the said James Stewart in like manner as aforesaid, but not otherwise, the said James Stewart shall receive from the said Companyafter the rate of Seventeen Pounds, Sterling, per annum, to commence on the day of his embarkation for Hudson's Bay as aforesaid and up to the day of his embarkation from thence to Europe in one of the ships of the said Company's service or in any Ship provided by them.

Provided always and it is hereby expressly agreed between the said parties hereto that it shall shall be law ful for the Governor or Governor or other Officers of the said Company in North America at any time during the said Term of Five Years or such additional Term as aforesaid to dismiss the said James Stewart from their service and direct his return from thence to Europe in one of the Ships in their employment or in some ship provided by them and in such case his wages are to cease from the day of his embarkation for Europe. And further that in case the said James Stewart shall at any time during this contract desert the service of the said Company, or otherwise neglect or refuse duly to discharge his duty as such hired servant as aforesaid, then he shall forfeit and lose all his Wages for the recovery whereof there shall be no relief either in Law or Equity.

In Witness whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands.

(Signed)
JAMES STEWART,
EDWARD CLOUSTON.

(Signed)
WILLIAM ISBISTER, witness.
JAMES LEASK, witness.

And here in this place, I desire to state that in recording the reminiscences of bygone days, it is done with no spirit of egotism on my part but rather to wish to keep in remembrance the doings, manner of life, customs of a handful of men, who by good government, sound discretion and upright principles held the almost half of a continent, inhabited by savage tribes, in peace and good order. Far removed from civilization, practically undefended and utterly unable to defend themselves physically from the attacks of savage tribes, they passed their time in security, solely by the omnipotenc of truth and justice. And now in recording the scenes and incidents I have observed in those "good old times," which I look back upon with a kind of respectful awe, I do so with pleasure, but only sorry that the task of

recording those times was not placed in worthier hands.

After signing my agreement with the agent at Stromness, I passed the winter quietly at my home in Burray, one of the Orkney Islands. The year wore round and in the month of June we were looking out in anxious expectation of the arrival of the Company's ships, which generally passed in front of our island on their way to Stromness. On the 10th day of June two large ships were observed to pass which on passing fired off several cannon as a warning of their approach.

We had no doubt but that these were the ships of the Hudson's Bay Company, as no other ships approached the Orkney Islands in this style. But we were soon confirmed in our conjectures, for on the 13th of the month I received a letter from Mr Clouston directing me to hold myself in readiness to go on board of one of the Hudson's Bay Company's ships at Stromness on the 20th and embark for York Factory. I immediately prepared to start the little time remaining being chiefly employed in visiting my acquaintances and kinsfolk, bidding each one good-bye with a kindly exchange of good wishes on both sides. On Wednesday, the 18th day of June, 1851, I took my last farewell of my dear father and mother whom I was destined never to see again on this earth, This was a separation I felt very much as I always had a sincere respect for my parents, a virtue which, I think, was better observed fifty years ago than it is now. To this day I have never forgot my father's humble, but happy, fireside, and the many pious lessons I there received from a kind Christian father; and I feel an unbounded satisfaction in the reflection that I never in my recollection spoke an angry word to my parents. This may seem but a trivial matter to reflect upon in these degenerate days, but still I do think that there is nothing lost by keeping inviolate the fifth commandment.

My brother, with another young man, got a boat and took my two companions, James Anderson and James Brown, and myself up to Stromness, which is thirty miles distant by sea from Burray. On our arrival we duly reported ourselves to Mr. Clouston, who directed us to go to a boarding house and stay there till called upon as the ship was not yet ready to take us on board. My brother remained with me that night and the next day bade me good-bye and returned to Burray. Thus I had parted from every relation I had in the world, and who with the exception of my brother and my sister Mary, I was destined never again to see on this earth, and they only after an interval of thirty years. On the 19th we were still told to wait on shore as the ship was not yet ready to receive us. We therefore spent the day in strolling through the quaint old town of Stromness and wondering what sort of life we were to have on board of the ship.

On the morning of the 20th, while sitting at breakfast, we heard the sound of the bellman, who was perambulating the streets, and between the jangling of his old bell shouted in a stentorian voice, "O yez, O yez, All of you who have engaged to serve the Hudson's Bay Company in North America are requested to appear at the office of Mr. Edward Clouston to be in readiness to go on board the ships."

At that time there lay in the harbour of Stromness the two ships of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Prince of Wales and the Prince Rupert; the former bound for

York Factory and the latter for Moose Factory. Apart from these two vessels there was also the Prince Albert, a vessel bound for the Arctic regions in search of Sir John Franklin and his party. Sir John Franklin had gone out with two ships, the Erebus and Terror, on a voyage of discovery to the Polar regions in the year 1845. I well remember these ships passing through the Pentland Firth in the June of that year. They were accompanied by a Government steamer who conveyed them half way across the Atlantic and then returned home. Sir John Franklin's party was spoken to in the fall of that same year by some whalers in Davis Straits, and that was the last that any of them were ever seen alive. The Prince Albert was under the command of the late Captain Kennedy who died at St. Andrews, Manitoba, about four years ago.

During the time of our stay at Stromness Lady Franklin came down by the packet steamer to Kirkwall and thence to Stromness to see Captain Kennedy off Stromness at this time was a lively place Balls and concerts and what not was the order of the day, and was patronized by most of the elite of the Orkney Islands. The Prince Albert sailed about a week before the Company's ships. Captain Kennedy departed with a salute of guns both from the ships and the shore.

But to return to ourselves; after breakfast we all repaired to the Agent's office, where we found that the first thing that we had to undergo was a medical examination before going on board. This was however not a very formidable affair. A glance at our tongues, a smart rap on the chest and some questions as to the ages of our grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts, and if any of them happened to die frequently was about the whole ceremony. This being done we were all packed off bag and baggage in an old herring boat and rowed off to the Prince of Wales, the largest vessel of the two, and there dumped on board in a very unceremonious manner. Here we found everything in a state of chaos and confusion. Boxes and bales of goods were lying around promiscuously in all directions. Everything seemed to be in a topsy-turvy condition; according to the remark of an old sailor, "Everything on the top and nothing handy." I descended into the forecastle in order to see what sort of quarters we were likely to have on this craft, but, alas, I could not see any place where even a rat could lay his head. Every nook and corner was chock full of goods, so much so that we had no where to stow our trunks save under the forecastle ladder. The number of young men in our company engaged to go out to Hudson's Bay was thirty six, gathered from different parts of the Orkneys, with some four or five from Shetland. Now the query was where were we all to sleep? It was a grim outlook, for all the space available that could be seen was not above two feet square. Necessity however is the mother of invention. When night came fourteen of us got squeezed in under the deck beams and upon the bales of goods, but the surface was rough and uneven, and the sensation produced very forcibly reminded me of going to sleep among the rocky boulders that encircle our native shores, yet somehow we made a "shake down" among these hills and hollows. The sailors facetiously termed this "the field bed," which was hardly appropriate, as in a field we would not have been squeezed down so tightly at

any rate. However we got used to it and began to find it not so bad after all; that is when lying quietly at anchor in the harbour of Stromness; but when we got out to sea and the vessel began to toss about the experience was something terrible. I had a pretty comfortable berth close to the starboard side of the ship, and would have enjoyed it immensly only for one or two drawbacks which rather interfered my comfort. Firstly, it was all very well when the ship was on the larboard tack, I being on the weather side, had ample room as I was on the top of the heap, but when the ship turned on the starboard tack it was very little short of murder, as being on the lee side, I had the full weight of my thirteen bed-fellows squeezing me almost to a jelly rendering sleep impossible.

Anotner source of discomfort was that my nearest bedfellow had an ugly custom of sleeping with his arm stretched out at right angles from his body, and when in a state of somnabulism was used to throw his fists about in all directions, something like the evolutions of the sails of a windmill, perfectly regardless of whom or what he struck. Often when I had got nicely tucked in and had dozed off in a state of peace with myself and all the world would I get rudely awakened by a sound whack between the shoulders from the fist of Magnus Cromarty that would almost knock the wind out of me and shut off sleep for some time. Magnus Cromarty was from the island of South Ronaldshay and, like myself, had been bred to the sea; consequently we became fast friends, notwithstanding his awkward mode of sleeping. The rest of the party, not sharing in the "field bed," slept on boxes and bales of goods, here and there, wherever they could find a corner to squeeze into. But these incouveniences did not dampen our spirits much, nor had the least effect upon our appetites or impair the good humour which prevailed amongst us.

The Prince of Wales, the ship in which we embarked, was, what is called, a full rigged ship of about 750 tons register. She was commanded by Captain Herd, a veteran in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had navigated through Hudson's Straits for many years. Her other officers were Mr. Reid, first officer; Mr. Hackland, second officer, and Mr. Bishop, boatswain. Mr. Reid and Mr. Hackland were both Orkneymen. I do not know what became of Mr. Reid, but Mr. Hacktand got command of an East India ship which went down with all hands in a storm off the Cape of Good Hope in 1855.

The Prince of Wales was, in the way of discipline, conducted strictly in man-o-war style. All routine orders were given by the boatswain's whistle, and every thing done systematically. Magnus Cromarty and myself, being bred to the sea, were taken in along with the sailors; we had to stand watch and ward with them and go aloft when required. This gave us many advantages not shared in by the others who had engaged in the Company's service. For instance, we were allowed as much fresh water as we required while the others were restricted to one quart per day. There were several other perquisites we enjoyed which the others did not, the best of which was, in our estimation at that time, that our grog was not watered to the extent which that of the others were.

We lay in Stromness ten days after we

were put on board, and during that time boats were continually passing between the ship and the shore, but once on board none of us were permitted to go on shore again. To those of our party whose relations lived in the vicinity of Stromness this was something of a hardship, but for myself I did not care much, for were I permitted to land I would only be among people that were utter strangers to me.

On the afternoon of the 1st of July 1851, the Blue Peter was hoisted to the masthead of the Prince Rupert, which was the signal for sailing. A fresh breeze had sprung up from the south-east, and every preparation was made for starting. Mr. Clouston, the agent, came on board and called the roll of those engaged to go out in the service of the Company, in order to make sure that none of us had escaped, then shook hands with us all and went on shore. The pilot then came on board, the anchors were weighed and the sails spread to catch the favorable breeze. A salute of five guns were fired from each ship as a parting farewell to Stromness, and in the twilight of the evening the ships sailed gallantly through Hoy Sound; which being accomplished the pilot took leave of us and we entered upon the broad Atlantic.

After the bustle of getting under way was over I stood upon the deck and watched the receding shores of Orkney, wondering in my mind if ever I should be permitted to see them again. I could not help heaving a sigh when they sank from view in the darkness of the night; for I had left behind all that was dear to me on earth. I had left behind me the land of my birth and childhood and the graves of my kindred. About midnight I turned in and rested as comfortably as could be expected under the circumstances which I have already mentioned, until aroused by the shrill whistle of the boatswain pipins all hands to wash the decks. This is a duty which must be performed on every well regulated ship in favorable weather. The decks are washed and holy stoned every morning in order to make them white and clean. This reminds me of the distich have often heard and which is generally called the sailors rendering of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue:

"Six days shalt thou work and do all thou art able.
On the seventh holy stone the deck and scrape the cable."

On getting up I saw that it was a beautiful morning, the sun was shining brightly, and the ships were dancing merrily over the waves with a spanking fair breeze; we were just passing the "Baron Rona," a lonely rock lying out in the Atlantic Ocean some leagues northwest of Cape Wrath. To the eye of a sailor the scene was delightful, but, alas, to the majority of my fellow passengers the out look was gloomy enough. Instead of gazing at the beauties of the ocean they were leaning over the bulwarks in all the agony of sea-sickness and relieving themselves of everything that would turn up This state of things, however, did not last long; a few days set all that right, with the exception of one poor fellow from Shetland who did not turn up on deck until we arrived in smooth water in the Hudson Straits. The crowd turned out to be fairly healthy who hardly could get enough to eat.

After a few days when order began to be restored I began to look around me and tried to form an idea of what sort of customers my fellow travellers were.

The first one I got acquainted with was Magnus Cromarty, already mentioned; the next was a young man also from south Ronaldshay, named John Thompson, a very good quiet young man, but in my opinion much too soft to encounter the hardships of the company's service. Poor fellow! he died a few years after he came into the country. The rest of our company was chiefly from the Mainland of Orkney, who were, upon the whole, a nice set of fellows. On the comical side, however, there was in the first place a little snipe, the tailor, a diminutive individual about five feet in height, who had thrown aside his lapboard, his needles and thimble, and last but not least his wife whom he had married about a month previous to his departure, in order to become an adventurer in Hudson's Bay Territories. He was a trim little fellow, full of comic songs and witty sayings and droll behaviour, so much that he was a universal favorite with the company.

Next was Sloper, the man who knew everything from the calculation of an eclipse to the sticking of a pig. This individual was from the heights of Pomona where the inhabitants rarely ever get a glimpse of the ocean. Mr. Sloper, it appears, had crossed the Pentland Firth once in his lifetime and in consequence was no slouch of a traveller in his own estimation. The Pentland Firth at the point of crossing is about seven miles wide. This individual was the general butt of the party on account of his propensity to brag and draw the long bow. Some of our party, I am sorry to say, would relate some tall story of his own experience in order to draw out Sloper, who would invariably produce something of his own which would knock the other into the shade altogether. But I shall pass on and leave Mr. Sloper for the mean time, nothing doubting but that he will turn up on some future occasion. These were the two most conspicuous characters in our company, but take them all in all they were quite a jolly lot and got along together very well. We had plenty of good food and very little work to do; the weather was delightful as a rule, with the exception of one gale in mid ocean which lasted for about twenty-four hours.

My principal occupation was in doing small jobs in the way of splicing ropes or other little work about the rigging. My companion at work was a sailor of the ship, named John Hicks. He was a first class seaman having served his time in the Royal Navy. We were fast friends and had many a good joke together. I remember however, playing off one that nearly got me into serious trouble at the time. It was on a beautiful calm day, the ship was lying almost motionless, the Atlantic being nearly as smooth as a mirror. Hicks and I were sitting by the windlass engaged in fixing some rope in connection with the fore topgallant sail, at the same laughing at old George the cook, who was waddling around the deck, busy getting up dinner for the officers and cabin passengers. In a little time our job being finished I was sent aloft to reeve the rope through the block. I went and did as required, which being done, Hicks called to me to throw down the end of the rope to him. Just at that moment I perceived that old George, had deposited a large pile of plates and dishes on the deck in front of the cook's galley in order to have them washed. Just then the wicked thought entered my mind that if I could manage to hit that pile of dishes with the

ond of the rope, it might have the effect of dissipating that drowsy feeling which seemed to pervade the people on deck at that time. Accordingly as old George was standing beside the pile, tucking up his sleeves preparatory to commencing operations, I gathered up a few coils of rope in my hand and taking a steady aim for old George and his pile, I made a throw. My aim was a true one; the rope descended grazing old George's off ear and landing straight in the midst of the pile of crockery with a crash knocking the whole affair into splinters. The noise aroused all hands on deck from their lethargy and caused them to rush to the lee side of the cook's galley to find out the cause of the rumpus. Meanwhile old George stood for a moment transfixed, apparently unable at first to realise the magnitude of the disaster. At length his pent up feelings found vent and—well, I never heard such a profane old rascal in all my life, the air was lurid with swearing. I was nearly on the mind to go down and chastise the old sinner on the spot, but I suddenly remembered that I ought to stay where I was and watch the course of the wind, and besides, if I went down I might meet with an accident, and I was safe where I was seeing old George was too clumsy to climb the rigging. I therefore slid down to the forecap and sat down and waited till the storm would blow over. After swearing a spell the old fellow seemed to be much relieved and finally with the help of the boys around the pieces were thrown overboard, after which old George resumed his wonted demeanour. I saw then that the storm had abated and therefore I ventured down. Old George met me with a laugh, and remarking with a significant nod, "The Company is rich."

Shortly after this the temperature began to fall and as short nights became quite cool, an indication that we were approaching the icy regions of the north. On the 21st of July we sighted two large icebergs sailing along in stately grandeur. It was with mingled feelings of admiration and awe that I gazed upon these stupendous blocks of ice moving on in solitary silence, reminding me of some ancient Gothic castles broken loose from earth and drifting away upon the ocean. We were now in Davis Straits and drawing near to the entrance of Hudson Straits. The sea now became smoother and the icebergs more numerous, while here and there seen small floes of ice, and whales were frequently noticed. On the 24th of July we discovered land for the first time after leaving Europe; it was Cape Resolution on Resolution Island at the eastern entrance of Hudson Straits, in lat. 61 deg. 30 min N. and long. 65 deg 10 min. W. It seemed a bleak cluster of black rocks without any sign of vegetation. The shores were strewed with icebergs of all shapes and sizes, while the sea all around was thickly covered with floating ice, and the utmost caution had to be exercised in threading our way through it, especially on the night, but luckily the nights were quite short and not very dark.

About this time there was considerable merriment among the boys caused by the appearance of James Murray, a Shetlander, who through a severe attack of sea sickness and laziness—chiefly the latter had kept himself under hatches from the time left Stromness until now, when the ship having got into smooth

water he ventured on deck. There was no end to the banter he received on his appearance. One of the boys gravely introduced him to the rest of the company as a fresh passenger come on board, having made his escape from the Esquimaux, after being held prisoner by them for some years. Some would ask him why he did not bring his Esquimaux wife with him, while others declared that it was a burning shame for a man to run away and leave his family even although they were half Esquimaux, and thus they went on from one thing to another with an incessant torrent of raillery on the poor fellow.

On the 26th we arrived at Nottingham Island, which lies nearly half-way through the Straits. We lay becalmed a long way off shore among the ice which was pretty thick here. Between us and the shore were extensive ice floes with a great many stately icebergs towering amongst them.

In the afternoon two or three guns were fired from the ship in order to acquaint the Esquimaux of our arrival. In about an hour afterwards we heard a noise between us and the shore, very much resembling the screaming of the clouds of sea fowl that inhabit the cliffs of the Orkney Islands. In a little while we could descry a fleet of canoes, or kyaks as they are called, making their way out from the shore, among the ice floes, toward the ship; and in a short time they were alongside of us. But such a Babel of noise I never heard before. I should think that there were about five hundred of these creatures, all shouting, or rather screaming at the highest pitch of their voices some unearthly gibberish which I, of course, could not understand, and I do not know that anybody else could, as it seemed to be a repetition of the same thing over and over again. It sounded something like, "Ah houh, ah houch, kitty swabach," this was repeated incessantly from every throat in that singular company. On arriving at the side of the ship they were not permitted to come on board, which no doubt was a wise precaution, as had they gotten that liberty they would have very soon filled the ship and we would be powerless should they be evilly disposed. Before they came near the ship Capt. Herd issued strict orders that neither crew nor passengers would be allowed to trade or have any intercourse of trade whatever with them until he was done trading with them. The reason of this was obvious; these people had a large quantity of walrus' tusks and deers' horns and such like, which being in the trade of the Hudson Bay Company, was of course monopolized. Some of the boys thought this edict of Capt. Herd was unnecessarily severe; but I think he was quite right so far as we were concerned for we were then servants of the Company and had no right to trade on our own account. And supposing that we had the liberty to trade, what good would those things have done the possessor? We were going to a country where we could not dispose of them, and we could not carry them around with us, so in that case the possession of such stuff would be worse than useless.

However after the Captain had secured all the valuables we were allowed to trade with them; but then they had nothing to dispose of except clothing, which they readily give away for very little in return. Several of our party for a needle or two, or an old knife, would get some of them to strip off their sealskin dress and barter it away, leaving themselves as naked as

they were at their birth. These Esquimaux were extremely fond of pieces of iron, such as iron hoop, knives, needles and old hand saws; the latter of which was the chief article that the Captain gave them in exchange. What seemed very singular to me was that any article they got from the ship in trade they invariably licked all over with their tongues.

After sunset they were all ordered away from the ship, they therefore paddled off to a large ice floe, not far from the ship, and there they landed, and after hauling up their kyaks upon the ice, sat down and proceeded to inspect the articles that they had obtained in barter from the ship. They all squatted down upon the ice, even those who had divested themselves of all their clothing sat down upon their bare haunches, apparently as happy as if they were seated on velvet cushions. After inspecting their wares they returned to the shore.

These Esquimaux are a short, stumpy race, rarely exceeding five feet in height, but they are wonderfully stout, and have long black hair. Their clothes are composed wholly of sealskin, and commonly the pants, coat and cape are all made in one piece with boots of the same material. The dress of the women is in much the same style as that of the men. In walking they waddle along in a gait very much resembling that of a fat duck; but they are very alert in their kyaks and can perform some wonderful feats of skill in them. These kyaks are made of sealskin stretched on a framework made from the ribs of the whale or of the walrus. I did not see any wood amongst them, every hard substance being apparently made from bone. I saw some bows and arrows with them, a blown bladder being mostly attached to each arrow. This, I understood, was used in catching whales, which is an enterprise that the whole settlement takes a hand in. When a whale is wanted a fleet of kyaks, plentifully supplied with ammunition in the shape of bows and arrows with blown bladders, start out into the open sea and when a whale is seen blowing the kyaks, who go with the speed of an arrow, hasten to the spot, and when the whale makes his appearance a flight of arrows is stuck into him, whereupon the whale dives down but is soon forced to come to the surface again in order to breathe, when another flight of arrows is shot into him. The whale descends again, but on account of so many bladders buoying him up he soon becomes exhausted and is stabbed to death by the spears of the Esqimaux. He is then towed ashore and divided among the crowd.

We lay attached to the ice floe all night, it being a dead calm, and on the morrow the same kind of weather prevailed. A number of muskets, bayonets and cutlasses were brought on deck and cleaned, and after breakfast I understood that an expedition to go on shore had been decided on. The longboat was hoisted out and the crew were mustered by the boatswain, among whom were included Magnus Cromarty and myself. Arms were then served out, each man receiving a musket and bayonet, a pistol and cutlass with lots of ammunition; four swivel guns were also put in the boat. With such a warlike preparation I made sure that we were to have some bloody work on shore and, not having time to make a will, I left orders with the ship's steward that Sloper should have my grog if I did not return.

But when I saw Capt. Herd and the first officer enter the boat together with the ladies from the cabin I had my doubts about having a fight on shore. The cabin passengers were as follows: the Rev. Mr. Watkins of the Church Missionary Society, going out as a missionary among the Indians; Capt. Hill, R. A., going out to take charge of some pensioners at Fort Garry; and Mrs. Mills and her two daughters, going out to take charge of the Ladies' Academy, St. John's College, Red River. Seeing the ladies take passage with us, my prospects of a fight on shore faded away considerably. After rowing a long way through the ice-pack we landed in a deep bay, in form very much resembling St. Margaret's Hope in Orkney, only that the surrounding shore was totally different. The country seemed to be nothing but bare black rocks without sign of vegetation, while around the shore was a strange mixture of masses of rock and lumps of broken ice, with two or three huge icebergs lying stranded in the middle of the bay. We saw no sign of inhabitants and everything was bleak and weird looking in the extreme. We landed without opposition, for the simple reason that there was nothing to oppose us, not even a sparrow being seen to herald our approach. The Captain, after leaving Mr. Hicks and myself in charge of the boat with strict injunctions not to leave it on any account, started off with the rest of the party and were soon lost to sight among the rocks. After resting for a time my companion and I amused ourselves by each fixing a swivel on the gunwale of the boat and bombarding a large iceberg which lay in front of us. We soon got tired of that however, as our firing had no appreciable effect upon the iceberg we therefore dismounted our guns and lay down to consider what we should do next in order to dispel the monotony of our existence. Within a few minutes we were startled from our reverie by the appearance of two Esquimaux with their kyaks who came in around the western point of the bay. They did not see us however, our boat being hidden between two high rocks. We lay still until they came directly opposite to us when we raised our muskets and discharged a blank shot over their heads. The effect was instantaneous, they gave a piercing shriek of alarm and in less time than it takes me to write it, they wheeled around and were out of sight in a twinkling. Both Hicks and myself were truly sorry that we had frightened the men so much, but we did it unthinkingly and had no idea that we would scare them so much else we would not have done it.

Some time after this, two of the boats crew returned terribly tired with scrambling over the rocks and carrying such a load of arms and ammunition. They had left the party a long way to the east of where we were. Leaving these two in charge of the boat, Hicks and I took our arms and started out for a walk. We climbed among the rocks to the west of where we lay, and on gaining the ridge we discovered a deep bay similiar to the one in which we had landed. We saw also that this was the spot where the Esquimeaux were located, for there were a great many tents pitched on the shore; there were also a great number of children to be seen swimming amongst the icebergs in the bay, apparently as much at home as if they were young seals. We descended down towards the village on purpose to see what sort of dwellings they had, and find out all we could, but we had not pro-

ceeded far when we saw two men from the village approaching us, who when they came near, motioned us to go back. This we were unwilling to do as we had a strong desire to see their habitations, but when these poor fellows saw we were bound to go forward they began to cry while the tears ran down their faces. This settled the matter, we could not proceed while two Esquimeaux were blubbering like children and imploring us to go back. We there turned back to the boat, we saw it was no use going any farther among the rocks as there was nothing to be seen. I have no doubt that the Esquimeaux dreaded our coming into the village, after the fright they had got by our firing over their heads in the bay.

Shortly after the Captain with his company returned, tired enough I could see, and we rowed back to the ship. The morning of the 28th was like its predecessor, clear and calm, and consequently we had to remain in the same place. We had several more visits from the Esquimeaux. A number of women and children came to see the ship, but they were not permitted to come on board. Two men managed to get on deck but they were soon made to get over the side of the ship again. Instead of the light kyak, the women and children had a sort of a boat shaped like a tea chest, and rowed with oars; but made of the same material as the kyaks are namely, sealskins. A boatful of them came alongside of the ship, but, like the others, were not allowed to come on board They had some deer skins and sealskins which they traded with our boys for knives and needles. One of our young fellows offered a woman a large needle for the child which she had slung on her back, which she readily handed over to him. He took it for a joke, but he had the greatest difficulty to get the woman to take the child back again. Of course the incident was a source of much merriment to the other lads on the ship.

In the afternoon a smart breeze having sprung up, we cast off from the ice and bade farewell to Nottingham Island, and threading our way through the loose ice, in two days we came to Mansfield Island, which lies near the entrance of Hudson's Bay. Here we found the Prince Rupert, the Moose Factory ship, from which we parted from two days after our departure from Stromness, this Island being the rendezvous in case of being separated in the Atlantic. The Moose ship had several men on board for York Factory which she had taken to favor the way on account of the Prince of Wales being so much crowded. The Prince of Wales was a new ship much larger than the Prince Rupert, but on account of the Prince Rupert arriving at Mansfield Island three days before we came, showed that she was the faster sailing vessel of the two.

As the weather was fair and calm the long boat was again hoisted out and the same boats crew selected. I suppose it was because we had done so well before, but whatever might be the reason the same company went ashore, ladies and all, but this time without arms of any kind except that the chief officer had one fowling piece.

This Island was unlike Nottingham Island, being low and flat with shelving rocks reaching far out into the seas, rendering it very difficult to find a landing place but happily the sea was smooth as a mirror. However we got into a creek where we made a landing, which was no

sooner effected than we saw a deer scampering over the rocks at an enormous speed The whole party started in the direction that the deer had gone, leaving as usual, Hicks and myself in charge of the boat Mansfield Island being low lying we had a much greater range of vision than at Nottingham Island. We saw no sign of any natives on the Island, they being all gone east towards Resolution and Nottingham Islands, but we found traces of their having been here at a recent date. We saw the places where they had encamped and found several of their graves. As there is no soil here to dig into, the Esquimeaux bury their dead in a pile of stones in order to preserve them from the bears and wolves which prowl around.

As the island was flat, so that we could see somewhat around us, Hicks and I took a small walk inland, taking care not to get out of sight of the boat. We saw that the island was flat and stony, chiefly lime-stone, which was different from that of Nottingham Island, the rock being there bleak. We saw several small lakes here, one which we came upon being about half a mile long upon the shores of which grew a species of short stunted grass, very pretty and of a short velvety appearance. I was truly glad to see it, as it was the first sign of vegetation I had seen since I left my native home. It was indeed pretty an oasis in the desert, but the blooming daisies of my native home, and the sky-larks were not there.

At the opposite side of the lake we saw, what we took to be, two large white stones, and as the distance was not very far we concluded to go and see what they were. But, to our astonishment, on approaching close to them our fancied two white stones got lazily up and showed themselves to be two large Polar bears I could not for the life of me tell who were the most surprised, the bears or the men, but I rather think that the men were. For a minute or two the two parties stood gazing at each other, when the bears, as if anxious for further acquaintance; came slowly towards us; but Hicks and I suddenly remembered that we had urgent business at the boat, for which we made a race in order to see who would get there first. On looking around we saw that the bears came on a few paces further and then stepped into the lake and seemed to enjoy themselves by swimming around, and no doubt remarking to each other, "What fools these mortals be." I think, however, that it was well that we were unarmed when we met these animals, as had it been otherwise we might have provoked a quarrel with them, and the chances would be that we would have came off second best

Our party having arrived about an hour afterwards we rowed back to the ship, but without getting on board we had to go immediately to the Prince Rupert as a state dinner had been prepared on board of that vessel to which the gentlemen of our ship were invited. Having therefore left the ladies on board the Prince of Wales we started off for the Prince Rupert, leaving our ship in charge of second officer Hackland. The parties we took on board the Prince Rupert were Capt. Herd, Chief officer Reid, Rev. Mr. Watkins, Capt. Hill R. A. and Dr. Beddome, the surgeon on board the Prince of Wales, Although the crew of our boat did not have the honour of dining in the cabin, yet we enjoyed ourselves better than if we had. We had an excellent dinner, which we stood much in need of,

and a stiff glass of grog with which to wash it down.

About 11 o'clock at night the wind began to blow freshly and the sea became somewhat rough, but this did not seem to disturb our dinner party. However the ships kept cruising backwards and forwards near each other, we being clear of the ice now. A little after midnight our gentlemen came on deck, a little mellow no doubt, but in perfect good humour with themselves and everybody else, but they descended the ship's side all right, and in a few minutes we were landed safely on the deck of the Prince of Wales. Both ships now fired a parting salute and then with a spanking breeze each one shaped its course for its appointed destination; the Prince of Wales for York Factory and the Prince Rupert for Moose Factory.

When the morning came we saw no sight of our consort the Prince Rupert, the weather was somewhat foggy but now there was no more ice to be seen so in that case we could carry more sail without fear The passage across Hudson Bay was uneventful, we had fine weather all the way When about one hundred and fifty miles from Churchill we lay becalmed a whole day. The captain had taken the observation at noon, after which the chief officer, Mr. Reid, came forward to where a knot of us were gathered around the forecastle I asked Mr. Reid how far we were from land. He said we were one hundred and fifty miles from Churchill, and that was the nearest point, and added with a smile that the Captain was preparing to send a boat ashore and that I and Cromarty were to go with her. I replied, with a laugh, that I was very much obliged to him and the Captain for the appointment, but begged leave to decline the honour as a row of one hundred and fifty miles was not in my way. "What," said Sloper, who was standing near, "that is nothing, I have rowed double that distance myself at a spell and thought nothing of it." Everybody looked at Sloper with amazement and Mr. Reid asked, "Where was that pray." "Why," said he, "I rowed from Duncansby Head to Berwick at one spell." "And do you call that three hundred miles?" asked Mr. Reid. "Aye, faith," said Sloper, "It is all that and more." "Well," said Mr. Reid, "I know the place you speak of well, and it is just seven miles." At this there was a roar of laughter at Sloper, and he never heard the end of that for some time.

On the 14th of August we discovered land, which at first sight reminded one of coming into the port of Flushing, in Belgium; the land being low and flat looking. All was hurry now on board our ship, the anchors and chains were brought on deck in order to prepare coming into harbour. About 10 o'clock a.m. we saw the company's little schooner from York Factory coming out to meet us. The schooner was in charge of James Hackland, brother of Mr. Hackland, second officer of the Prince of Wales. There was also a small sailboat which took the mails from us and started for York Factory. The schooner kept with us until we anchored in Five Fathom Hole which is seven miles from York Factory. We arrived there about 2 o'clock p.m. and as soon as the anchors were dropped, the process of unloading began. The schooner and some boats were employed to take the goods up the river to the Fort, as the water was too shallow for the ship to approach nearer. In old times the Fort was built closer to the mouth of the

river.

During the times of the war with France in Napoleon's time, York Factory was taken and sacked by La Perouse, a French navigator. After this the new fort was built further up the river, on the present site, so that it could not be attacked again except by boats. The bank of the river where the Fort is built is granite, but a very little distance back the land is one vast swamp.

This afternoon half of the company of Hudson's Bay Company's servants were told off to go on shore with the schooner, the rest were kept on deck to assist in unloading the ship. I happened to be among the party that were sent on shore. This was, as I before intimated, the 14th Aug, 1857, just two months less four days since I left Burray. The first thing that struck me on landing was the difference in complexion of the men who had been in the country some years, from that of the young men just landed with my-elf, the former being sallow looking and their face tanned with the sun and weather, the latter were fair and with something of a rosy complexion. But I had very little time to look around after landing, as we were immediately set to work to assist in unloading the boats and schooner as fast as they came from the ship, which occupied our time until nearly midnight.

That being over for the night we were sent to a house called the colony house, for what reason I do not know, but it looked to me like a large storehouse without any windows. Into this house we were sent, bag and baggage, and for supper a supply of pemican doled out to each man, an article of food I had never seen before. On examination of this curious looking stuff, I could compare it to nothing but a lump of mortar well bound together by hair. It seemed to be rather rough food to begin with in North America, and I began to think that if the country was as rough as the food, I had certainly struck the wrong place. I felt disgusted with the pemican and could not bear the sight of it, much less taste it, in consequence of which I had to go to bed supperless, wondering at the same time what my poor mother and sisters would think if they knew how I enjoyed my first supper in North America. On the next morning a change of diet was sent out to us, this time consisting of bread and salt geese. Now, I thought, we will have a respectable meal yet, but alas, we were doomed to disappointment, the geese being improperly cured with salt, on being cooked, created such an offensive smell that we threw the whole of them outside the house. But we had some bread of which we ate and tried to knaw a little of the pemican, which we began to feel not so bad after all, notwithstanding its repulsive look, so after satisfying our appetites in some measure with this unsavoring form, we were again called to work in unloading goods.

The time in which a ship remains at York Factory is always a busy season, because the utmost expedition is required to unload the vessel, and then ship the fur and other merchandise of the Company's trade. There are two reasons for this hurry, first, that the seasons being comparatively short, the object is to get the ship off as soon as possible, but the second and what I think is the chief one is that the anchorage place where the ship lies is very much exposed; Five Fathom Hole being in the offing where there is no shelter of any kind, and were a sudden storm to arise the danger of losing the ship would be very great. Again I was told that the underwriters in England refused

to become responsible for any insurance money if the ship remained at York Factory after the 5th of September. I do not vouch for the truth of this statement, but this was the generally received account among the Hudson's Bay Company's servants, and I think it quite possible.

However one thing I know is that we were obliged to work almost night and day, Sundays not excepted. When I remonstrated with some of the overseers of the work regarding the manner in which the Lord's day was desecrated, the answer generally was that the Lord had very little to do with the days at York Factory during the days that the ship was in port. When Sunday came around, which was on the 17th August, we worked very hard in the forenoon, but in the afternoon we were allowed a half holiday; this was I think for the purpose of giving all hands a breathing spell, and also to give the sailors of the ship a chance to have a run ashore and see the country.

As for myself I took a solitary walk along the river bank down towards the old fort. I could not lose my way because I could not penetrate any distance back from the margin of the river, the banks of the river being a dry ridge while less than fifty yards back the country was an impenetrable swamp, mud and water at the surface with eternal ice a few feet down beneath. I was told that at York Factory the ground never thaws out more than four feet during the hottest summer.

On arriving at the old fort I sat down and mused on the past. Here before me was a confused pile of ruins, pieces of iron lying around, remains of old stockades and traces of foundations where buildings once were situated. I tried to picture to myself what it must have been during the latter part of the last century. I tried to fancy I saw the bustle and anxiety around the fort when they saw the approach of the French navigator, La Perouse. I could see in my minds eye the armed boats despatched from the ship and rowing towards York Factory. Then appeared to my mind my poor unlettered countryman, William Tomison, a common laborer pleading with the officer in charge to get get the cannon out and fire on the approaching French, which was refused. Then I thought of Tomison getting the Indians and others to assist him in carrying away the furs and valuables from the fort and escaping to the woods with them. So that when the French arrived they found nothing but "a beggarly lot of old boxes," so to speak.

They carried off, however the officer in charge of the fort and dismantled the place. On their departure Tomison and his party of Indians issued from their hiding place, and put things in as good shape as possible, and packed up the furs into bales, and as poor Tomison could neither read nor write he marked each bale with certain hieroglyphic marks known only to himself. When the ship arrived from England, which she did under convoy, the seasons catch of furs were safe and intact, and were shipped on board the Company's vessel and reached England in safety. For this act of heroism Tomison was constituted Governor of the Company's affairs in the Northern department, and, as I have said, as he could neither read nor write, he was furnished with a competant clerk to do that part of the work. Under Governor Tomison's directions York Factory was built on the present site Governor Tomison amassed a large for-

tune and when he retired from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, he came home to his native island in the Orkney's, which is South Ronaldshay, my own birth place. Governor Tomison there endowed an Academy which remains to this day, where any child who attends there gets a free education. At present Tomison's Academy, as it is called, is the great seat of learning for the young men who choose to enter a seafaring life, whether in the British Navy or in the Merchantile Marine It is accounted one of the best places in Scotland for acquiring the science of navigation. And I may say that hundreds of active seamen have received their education there.

These things all came crowding on my mind while sitting on the ruins of the old fort at York Factory, but it was all silence there now, and the crumbling stockades and dilapidated walls were all that remained of a once busy place. The actors of that day were all gone from this transitory world and like the old fort were slumbering in silence. The scenes of that time had all passed away, and were I to revisit York Factory at this time the present fort would be in the same condition with regard to myself, as those who were busy actors there when I landed have all passed away, very few of them being alive, and those that are in life have left that place, so that there is not one at York Factory now that was there when I landed in 1851.

Five days after our landing from the ship the boats arrived from the Long Portage. These were the boats that brought the furs down from the Mackenzie river district. These left Fort Garry on the Red River about the 10th of June in each year. They were divided into two brigades of five boats each, manned by French half-breeds. Each brigade was in charge of what was called a guide, who were generally as proud of their position as if they were Lord High Admiral of the fleet. At the bidding of the guide they encamped for the night and at his bidding started forth in the morning. He had no bugle or bell to start the sleepy crews with he merely stood on the bank and shouted, "How, how how," Which was generally sufficient to start every man right end uppermost, if not, a willow generally did the business. These two guides were a long time in the service of the Company. Their names were Baptiste Bruce and Jean Baptiste Lesperance. They were two very good men and generally treated the young men from the old country with kindness and consideration, but more of this anon. They both died a few years ago at a good old age. Each boat was manned by eight men, viz., one skipper one bowsman, and six rowers. The skipper steered the boat with a long sweep while the bowsman stood in the bow with a long pole in his hand to guide the boat among the rocks on getting over the rapids The boats I speak of were called the Long Portage boats, on account of this trip they made to Long Portage. They left Fort Garry, as I said before, about the 10th of June and proceeded to Norway House north of Lake Winnipeg, where they took a load of goods for the far north or Mackenzie river district, and then returned to the Grand Rapids by way of Lake Winnipeg and after ascending the Saskatchewan as far as the English river, turned northwards till at length they reached the Long Portage, so called, because it divides the waters which flow eastwards from those that flows northwards. This portage is over twenty miles in length and in former

times the the goods for Mackenzie's river was carried over on men's backs, but I believe horses are now employed. The Mackenzie river boats were ready on the north side of this portage with the furs from the far north, and to take the goods which were brought up from Fort Garry, and these brigades took the furs and returned to Norway House, from whence they went to York Factory, where they took goods for Fort Garry that had come out by the ship and returned to Red River. This trip generally occupied about three and a half months, the boat generally arriving at Fort Garry about the middle or end of September.

These boats on their arrival at Fort Garry in 1841, had on board as passengers Lieut. Hooper, R.N., with twelve seamen of H.M.S. Plover, who was also out in the north searching for Sir John Franklin. The Plover lay somewhere in the vicinity of Williams land or Boothia Felix. Lieut. Hooper and twelve sailors took boat and coasted along the shores of the mainland of North America until they came to the mouth of the Mackenzie river, the season being too far advanced to return to the Plover, they ascended the Mackenzie river in the fall of 1850, and wintered at Fort Simpson. They then embarked on board the Mackenzie river boats and came to the Long Portage, where they were transferred to the Fort Garry brigades, and thus came down to York Factory, where they embarked on board the Prince of Wales for England.

On arriving at York Factory these sailors were billeted in the same house with us. They were a fine set of fellows, open hearted and frank as sailors usually are. On the evening after their arrival they procured some luxuries from the store in the fort and made preparations for a night of joviality, to which several of our party were invited, among the rest Cromarty and myself, together with some of the older hands from the fort. We spent a very pleasant evening in singing songs and reciting stories without anything to mar our good fellowship, with the exception of one little incident, which should be a lesson to many in teaching them to be careful how they should comport themselves in company. The case was this. Two Highland Scotchmen, servants of the Company had been invited to this friendly gathering with the others, who although they could speak the English language very well, kept up an incessant chattering between themselves in the Gaelic language, which none at the table understood but themselves. The sailors bore this rude behaviour for some time, till at length their patience being exhausted, one of them spoke to the Highlanders and told them that their conduct was a breach of etiquette, and common sense might have taught them that when they were the the guests of any party they should speak the common language of the company when they were perfectly able to do so; but if they wanted to have any private conversation between themselves in their own language, they had better retire to some other place. This modest request was unheeded by the Highlanders who appeared to be destitute of the principles of good breeding, in consequence the chattering in Gaelic was kept up as before whereupon the sailors rose up as one body and summarily ejected them from the

building. This in my way of thinking was only just and right, which was the opinion of all the others in the room. After this the evening was spent harmoniously and with songs and toasts to friends far and near the time passed away very pleasantly.

About a week after our landing from the ship, I and a few of the other hands were sent across the river to an island which was opposite the fort, to assist in haymaking; this to me was something very unusual, for in the first place I had never worked at haymaking before, and in the next place I never saw people wading knee deep in water making hay until I saw it here. It did not at all agree with my way of thinking to wade after the men who cut the hay and gather the wet hay off the top of the water and carry it ashore to dry land I was soon wet from head to foot; I am afraid I swore a little on that occasion. However about a week afterwards word was sent for us to return to the fort as we were wanted to go inland. The Long Portage boats were loaded up and ready to start for Red River. On arriving at the fort I found that the greater part of our young men had gone with the Saskatchewan Brigade. These were destined to winter at Edmonton or some of the forts on the Saskatchewan. Some of them were left at Cumberland, I think. The only one that remains in this vicinity is Mr. James Drever, who is now living at Muskeg Lake. He and Mr Samuel Leask, of St. Andrews, Manitoba and myself, are the only ones alive in the country who came out on the Prince of Wales in 1851.

I was appointed to go on the brigade of Baptiste Bruce, which consisted of seven boats There was only another of my ship mates in the brigade, namely George Murray, from Shetland, he was in another boat but under the same guide. The Brigade of Jean Baptiste Lesperance had started two days before. These boats, as I have before intimated, are manned by half breeds, who, as a rule, were generally of the lowest type. The guide had no control over them, except in the way of directing them where to land for meals, or to camp for the night, and to start them again. I do not know what the rest of them were but I know that the crew that I came up with were the most rascally thievish set that ever were congregated together The thieves between Jerusalem and Jericho could not hold a candle to them. When I left York Factory I was not allowed to take my trunk with me on pretence that there was no room for it. I therefore, having a good stock of clothes with me from home, was forced to put them in a bag. I was also directed to buy at York Factory the clothes needed for the coming winter, as my clothes were not suited for the purpose. On leaving York Factory, therefore, I had a well filled bag with not only clothes, but my future winter's supply of tea, sugar and tobacco. But on my arrival at Norway House everything was stolen from me except the few rags that were on my back. And there was no redress, one had to grin and bear it. On further knowledge of the ways of these fellows, I found that my experience was no exception to the rule. It was as far as I could learn the universal habit of the crews of these Long Portage brigades to fleece every youngster that was unfortunate enough to have been sent inland by them. And here I must say that much as I admired the straightforward dealings of the Hudson's Bay Company, they were very much to blame for allowing the young

inexperienced hands from the old country to be handed over to the tender mercies of these semi-savages, without the least means of redress. I have known respectable young men from the old country that on landing at York Factory were put on board those boats and had to submit to being kicked and cuffed all the way from York Factory to Norway House, with no better treatment than would be given to a dog. In addition to this every stitch of clothes would be taken from them except the few rags that remained on their backs. The Company would not allow even two of these young men to be together in one boat to comfort one another. They were, as I said, thrown among a lot of semi savages of whose language they did not know one word and in whose breasts there never existed a spark of mercy, I do say that the Company was to blame in this respect.

Again the work we had to engage in now was totally different from any that we were hitherto accustomed to do. The boats were heavy and clumsy, different from the ones we were used to in the old country. They had each six oars, and like the boats, were much too heavy. But the work all seemed in this country to be done by main strength and brute force. Every thing was in the most rough and primitive fashion. An oar was as much as a man could carry being made from a good sized tree, flattened a little on each side with the axe. Even the rowing of the French half breeds was quite different from the European fashion. They stood up at each stroke and sat down at each pull, and so on, sitting and standing alternately. This was to me an uncouth way of working a boat and I often wondered in my own mind what the sailors of Her Majesty's Navy would think of such a mode. Of course they made a big show and splutter, and a great noise in dipping their oars; they had an idea that they were doing wonderful work when they let their oars fall with a great plunge into the water. Even in Europe the difference between the British and French oarsmen is very marked. The French cannot get along without noise, as they delight to make a big show; but the British dip their oars with the least possible noise; but they beat the French hollow in making a boat go ahead. But it is well known that one cannot make a good boatsman or sailor out of a Frenchman.

The route from York Factory to Norway House is rugged in the extreme, being a series of narrow tortuous rivers full of whirlpools and rapids with occasional waterfalls. In ascending these rivers various devices had to be resorted to in order to overcome the difficulties met with. And first is the tracking line, which is used when the current is so strong that it cannot be rowen against, especially with the clumsy York boats, as they are called. In such a case a long line is provided, by which the boat is tracked up, one half of the crew taking their turn at it alternately This line is of a great length and each man attaches it to himself by means of a leather strap which is passed across the breast This strap is serviceable on all occasions, being used in tracking the boat and in carrying the the goods across the portages It is made with a broad piece in the centre with two long tails attached to it. These are made fast to the tracking line, and the broad part laid across the chest. In this way the men walk along the river bank towing the boat against the stream something like the canal horses in the old country. This is pretty rough work at the best, even if the bank of the river were

smooth to walk upon, but that is seldom the case. The general rule is that the banks of the river are either steep rocks or muddy swamps, filled with decayed branches or roots of trees. In either case it is terrible work for one just out from the lap of luxury in the old country. One moment you may be getting along fairly well the next up to the middle in mud and water. And then the roots and stumps of the trees were a great annoyance, as by these ones feet and limbs got terribly cut up and scratched, while his clothes would be torn to shreds. Between the thieving propensities of the French half breeds and the rough work on the road, I was pretty much in rags when I got to Norway House The portages are the next difficulties to contend with on the trip. Very many rapids and shallows are met with necessitating the unloading of the goods and carrying the goods and hauling the boats across on dry land. These portages vary in length from about forty yards to two miles Sometimes half a dozen of these portages are met with in a single day, for no sooner than one is crossed than a few strokes of the oar brings us to another. In those days all the goods of the Hudson's Bay Company were made, as a rule, up in packages of ninety pounds weight in each. In carrying these over the portages the leather strap is used, the long tails or ends being tied around a bale of goods which was set upon the back of the neck, between the shoulders with the broad part of the strap around the forehead. Another ninety pound package was then set upon the former, resting on the neck and back of the head. The hands were by these means at liberty. This was no doubt a convenient way of carrying a burden to those who were accustomed to it, but to the novice it was decidedly awkward, for unless they held their necks as stiff as did the children of Ismail in the time of Moses, one is apt to get a severe twist in the vertebral column which will make him wince a little.

The heavier portions of the goods such as rum puncheons and casks of crockery, were generally rolled over the portage provided the nature of the ground permitted this to be done, otherwise the casks were slung on poles and carried over on the shoulders of four men. Last of all the boats were hauled over upon rollers. This was the general mode of transportation all through the country in old times. It was very rough work, and the men who made a business of it, usually suffered much from rheumatism contracted by hard work and exposure. Yet I have seen some of the French half-breeds start on the Long Portage boats from Fort Garry in June, as thin as a rail, and on their return about the end of September were as fat and sleek as a porpoise, showing that hard as the work was, it agreed with them but then they had any quantity of pemican to eat. And as long as a native of this country had enough of that he was satisfied. To be sure it was strong food and about the best in many ways for those who had much travelling to do in the country. Flour was a scarce article in those old days, and this pemican was a food which served for both bread and meat, and had the advantage of being already cooked. A kettle of tea and a chunk of pemican was a splendid meal for a hungry traveller.

The steersman or skipper of the boat with which I came up to Norway House was an uncultivated half-breed named Paulette Paul. This was the most consummate blackguard that I ever encountered in all my life, either before or since The man, so far as I could learn, had not

one redeeming feature, he was simply a cruel savage and nothing else. The miseries I endured on this trip from this scoundrel and his crew of blackguards baffles description; I was kicked and cuffed by the vilest set of villains that ever trod this fair earth, so much so that on my arrival at Norway House I was hardly able to stand on my swollen limbs. Poor George Murray, who was in another boat, did not fare much better, although the crew of the boat that I came up with were the worst of the lot, but as a rule there is not much difference in a French half-breed with regard to cruelty when they have the advantage.

Our trouble began on the night after we left York Factory. On leaving the fort each man on the boats received a pint of rum, which is called by the French "une regale." We left York Factory about four o'clock in the afternoon, and ascended the Hayes river for about three or four miles and there encamped for the night. Then commenced an orgie of drunkeness and fighting such as I never witnessed before in my life time, so much so that Murray and myself were thunderstruck and nearly frightened out of our wits, verily believing that we had tumbled into the nethermost corner of pandemonium These drunken savages tumbled and tore at one another around the camp fire so much that one unaccustomed to the manners and customs of these devils in human shape would firmly believe that all the fiends in hell were let loose. George Murray and myself took our blakkets and went and hid ourselves in the bush, afraid of being killed in the melee, but, as luck would have it, they did not molest us.

We lay in the bush all night and slept until awakened in the morning by Baptiste Bruce yelling "howl howl". The French half-breeds had now gotten over their carousal and were making ready to start, Murray and I therefore took up our blankets and embarked on our respective boats, where it was not long before we knew what it was to be slaves, as having arrived at a part of the river where the water was shallow and the curren swift we were ordered out to take part in tracking.

From that until our arrival at Norway House there was no cessation of our slavish labors. Sometimes tracking, sometimes poling the boat among the rocks and shallows, and at other times carrying goods over the portages. Thus for twento-four days, the length of time we took between York Factory and Norway House, we were made to work worse than galley slaves. This was my worst experiency in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was my first baptism in the wilds of North America, and it was a pretty severe one. It, however, had one good effect, it taught the men thus treated to be self reliant and showed them that in this country one had to look out for himself ond if he got knocked to give knocks in return. It taught both I and others under like circumstances to adopt the creed of the celebrated Admiral Nelson, that is "Fear God, honour the king, and hate a Frenchman as you would hate the very devil."

It was no surprise to me to learn two years afterwards that up some where on the Saskatchewan river, I think at Edmonton, that Paulette Paul got into a drunken altercation with another French half-breed, of the same ferocious nature as himself, in the course of which Paulette Paul got shot in the jaw, and for lack of proper medical treatment, died in a few days after

tion, a fitting end for such a diabolical wretch.

On my arrival at Norway House, the young fellows who came up in the brigade of Desperance together with myself and George Murray, of course, compared notes. All had the same stories to tell of the treachery, cruelty and thieving propensities of the boatmen with whom they came up. At the time that I entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, Norway House was the headquarters and depot of the Northern Department, while Fort Albany was the headquarters of the Southern Department. The servants of the Company who came out from York Factory were generally sent up to Norway House to winter, so that in the spring they would be on hand to send to any place through the country where wanted, namely to Mackenzie river or other stations in the north. Here also in the spring came Sir George Simpson from Montreal in canoes manned by Iroquois Indians.

The Council was held at Norway House where all the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, Chief Factors and Chief Traders, came together to consult upon matters relating to the fur trade. These were the palmy days of the Hudson's Bay Company. Fur commanded a high price in the European markets and there were no free traders. The Company ruled supreme and there was no opposition throughout all the country between Hudson's Bay and British Columbia.

The Governor, Sir George Simpson, therefore came up from Montreal to hold the Council at Norway House every spring bringing with him any number of French habitants from the province of Quebec to serve the Company some of these were also left at Norway House. Thus were congregated at Norway House a mixture of Arcadians, Shetlanders and Highlanders from the western islands of Scotland, together with a goodly number of French from the province of Quebec.

In 1851-52, which was my first winter at Norway House, there were about forty or fifty men stationed there, of the total number I think there were about sixteen from Scotland, the rest were chiefly French or half breeds. These lived in one house which was called the men's house. At each end beds, or rather bunks were fitted up in a double tier, one above another, there was only one room in the house and it was heated with one big stove in the middle.

I had only been two days at the Fort when I was sent across the lake, which is called Rose's lake, with an Indian and his wife to assist at the fall fishing. I found this very lonesome at first, as I, of course, could not speak a word of Indian and my companions could speak but little English but nevertheless they were very kind to me, which was a pleasing contrast to the treatment I had received on my way from York Factory. Their manner of fishing was very different from that I had been accustomed to on the coast of Scotland, but however I very soon became an adept at it. I was learned to work the nets, and as I had known the art of making nets in Orkney I soon became a tolerable fisherman. Notwithstanding the difficulty of understanding each other I passed the time very agreeably with my companion. They were Christian Indians from Rossville a Wesleyan mission house about two miles from Norway House. They had been baptised in the Christian faith. This couple had no children there were

only three of us at the station, and were it not that I felt somewhat lonesome I was well enough.

The woman was very handy with her needle and was almost constantly employed in embroidering in silk or bead work upon dressed deer or moose skin, for making moccasins or tobacco pouches or what was called in those days a fire bag. As in working outside or travelling in cold winter weather pockets would be inconvenient the fire bag took their place. The bag was generally made of cloth or dressed deer skin, but in either case they were richly adorned with silk or bead work. They were of an oblong form and were hung upon a belt which was worn around the body. The outer side was ornamented very highly with gaudy fringes at the lower edge, this bag was the general receptacle for everything required on the journey, such as flint, steel and tinder box (there were no matches in those days,) pipe, tobacco, knife and sundry other articles. In my young days I made some pretentions to draw flowers, leaves of trees, etc. Therefore I drew some of these things on paper for Mrs. Budd as a model to work upon, which of course highly pleased the lady and in consequence I was quite at home with these people.

There was one odd costume which I noticed the woman had and which for a time puzzled me not a little and that was that while she was at work she was constantly moving her jaws as if chewing something. Having never seen any person doing this I wondered what was the cause and thought that perhaps the Indian female belonged to the order fruminantia or that class which chews the cud. At length getting better acquainted with her ladyship I one day ventured to ask the reason of this peculiar custom. She very readily told me it was pitch she was chewing and she gave me a piece and made sign for me to chew it, which I tried to do, but finding it somewhat bitter to my taste, I was glad to spit it out. However practice makes perfect, and so I learned afterwards to chew gum with a relish.

In about three weeks time the winter set in fairly, some snow had fallen and the ice began to form on the lake. Therefore we got orders to return to Norway House which place we arrived at on the first of November. This being All Saints day it was observed as a holiday at the Fort. I was glad to meet with some of my comrades again who had come out from the Orkney with me. There were about eight of us altogether, of the others some had been left at Oxford House, some had gone to Saskatchewan and some to Red River. Thus by degrees we were gradually separated, never to meet again.

I had now some time to look around me and see the place. Norway House is prettily situated at the mouth of the Jack river. This river derives its name from the great numbers of pike which swarm in it, the pike here being called Jackfish. The pike in French is called the Brochet. Hence the French call this river La Riviere Brochet.

The Jack river flows from Playgreen Lake, a small lake at the north end of Lake Winnipeg, and it empties its waters into Ross's lake, immediately north of Norway House. Across this lake about two miles from Norway House is a station called Rossville in honor of Mr. D. Ross, the gentleman previously in charge of Norway House. At the time of my arrival at Norway House this mission

station was in charge of Rev. W. Mason, who on the occasion of some differences between himself and the Methodist conference, severed his connection with the Methodists and joined the church of England. The missionary who founded the Methodist missionary station at Norway House was the Rev. James Evans, who was very successful amongst the Indians and made many converts. In course of time he got the Rev. Mr. Mason as a coadjutor in the work. It appears, however, that they did not pull together so well as they should have done. The Rev. Mr. Evans being a strict Christian enjoined his Indian converts to abstain from work on the Sabbath day. These Indians being in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company in their boats which went down to York Factory for goods. This brought the reverend gentleman into collision with that corporation. This considerably baffled him in his work of Christianizing the Indians. About this time time a rumour was set afloat that Rev Mr. Evans was guilty of a too close intimacy with some of the Indian females. Whether this was true or not, it made matters still worse. A sort of investigation was held before Sir George Simpson, the Governor of the company, but the evidence was very conflicting and as far as I could learn there was never any direct evidence brought out against Mr. Evans. Be that however as it may, the Rev. Wm. Mason, took his stand against Mr. Evans and in favor of the Hudson Bay Company who were said to be the prosecutors. The upshot of it was that Mr. Evans retired from the station he had helped to build up and Mr. Mason took his place. About two years after this transaction the Methodist conference at Toronto sent up a Rev. Mr. Turnbull to investigate the matter. The Rev. Mr. Mason, on becoming aware of this gentlemen's proposed visit, took passage for Red River and joined the Church of England. This confirmed the suspicion that all was not right, so far as Mr. Mason was concerned, but as he had severed his connection with the Methodist church he could not be brought to book on the case. This Mr. Mason was in charge of Rossville at the time I was at Norway House. I liked the man very much as he was a good preacher. As for the transactions I have mentioned concerning Mr. Evans I knew nothing of them only by hearsay, as they took place the year before my arrival at that place. But I know that Mr. Mason left the Methodists and joined the Church of England.

To the credit of the Christian Indians, be it said, that when they refused to work the Company's boats on the Sabbath, they asked the officers of the Company to let them have three boats manned by themselves and let the other three be manned by the heathen Indians and see which party made the quickest trip to York Factory and back again. This was granted. The Christian Indians lay by every Sabbath while the heathen Indians worked every day, the result was that the Christian Indians got back to Norway House three days earlier than those who worked on the Sabbath, a clear evidence of the value of the Sabbath as a day of rest. The voyage from Norway House to York Factory and back is usually made in a little over a month.

In addition to the men that lived in what was called the mens house, there was another house called the married mens' house, which was partitioned off into several rooms, each married couple having a

room. The married men at the post were three in number, namely: Mr. James Anderson, a Shetland man; Chief carpenter Hector Morrison, a Scotch Highlander fisherman and Andrew Harkness a French man from Quebec. In the mens' house the beds were arranged bunk fashion, one above another, at each end of the house, in each of which two men usually slept. My bedfellow was a veritable giant of a Frenchman, weighing about sixteen stone. He hailed from Quebec. I found him a decent sort of a fellow in his way, rather rough in his play, and somewhat overbearing at times, but still we got along tolerably well, considering all things. The Chief Factor in charge of Norway House during the time I was there was George Barnston, Esq. Though he has long since gone to his rest, I still remember him with sentiments of gratitude and respect for his kindnes and the interest he took in my welfare. He was a gentleman highly educated and well versed in etomology, botany and kindred subjects. Finding that I was of a studious nature, he kindly lent me various valuable scientific books, and rendered me all the assistance in his power. He understood that I was anxious to learn the French language, he therefore, lent me a French grammar and a French New Testament. Having these books and Frenchmen in the house with me, my progress was rapid in acquiring the language. A young Frenchman who could read took me in hand and by this teaching and by the two of us reading the New Testament verse by verse alternately I made great progress in learning to read the language, but my progress in speaking it was much slower as there was hardly any French spoken among the men at the house. But a few years afterwards when I was stationed at a place where nothing but French was spoken my learning to read it before was a great advantage to me.

There was, I found when I returned from the lake fishing, a high school established in the mens' house, but it was of very little help to me as I did not attend it very long. The teacher was a man from Rousay, one of the Orkney Islands, whose name was James Inkster. He was a man like many others, besides, of very high pretetsions, but of extremely low abilities, which was rendered still more odious by his jealous and envious disposition. He always seemed to be in fear that someone would supercede him in the good graces of Mr. Barnston, and could not tolerate the thought that there was anyone at the fort better educated than he. I was no long at the school before I found that he was very illiterate, he had some small knowledge of reading and writing, but his knowledge of arithmetic was very limited. I held my peace however, and it was not long before he had the sense to discover that I was better at arithmetic than he and consequently he would hardly speak to me. For this I did not care much as with the books I had I constituted myself my own schoolmaster, and in doing this I made much better progress than I ever could have made under the tuition of James Inkster. This man tried hard to ingratiate himself into the good graces of Mr. Barnston, but unfortunately for himself, he took the wrong method of proceeding, which was by constituting himself an eavesdropper, a spy, and a talebearer, consequently every idle word or joke made at the mens' house was straightway reported to Mr. Barnston, no doubt highly colored by Mr. Inkster himself.

The house which was occupied by the unmarried men was presided over by an eccentric old fellow named Andrew Goudie a native of Shetland, who acted as cook and general housekeeper, and in addition milked the cows. This man, who had been upwards of forty years in the company's service, was a strange mixture of religion and superstition—chiefly superstition. He, shortly before my arrival at Norway House, had been over at Rossville attending some revival meetings and had undergone what he was pleased to call conversion. Whatever Andrew may have undergone by that I cannot say, but at any rate, one thing was certain, his temper was in nowise improved thereby, that he was as cranky as ever. He took a notion, however, that being converted, he had a mission to perform, and that consisted of nothing less than the conversion of the heathen around him, both white men and Indian. As a beginning he forthwith adopted an Indian boy, a very imp of Satan, and after having given him a good scrubbing and providing him with a decent suit of clothing, had him christened Adam, in honor of the great pregenitor of the human race. By so doing he had an idea that if he converted Adam, the whole human family would necessarily follow. But the great difficulty in carrying out a scheme often lies in the beginning. It proved so in this case. Adam would not be converted by any rules known to Andrew Goudie. His ward was as untractable as a mule, and prayers, persuasion and tears were of no avail. Even the forcible application of a cudgel failed to instil the principles which old Andrew sought to impart. The adopter and the adopted led a sort of cat and dog life, sometimes in good humor with one another and more often otherwise. Yet old Andrew was very watchful of his ward, and took particular care that Adam was at home and in bed at seasonable hours.

The long winter evenings were spent by the men in various ways, some having a game at cards, or draughts, some reading, and some telling stories and so forth. The light used was made by burning sturgeon oil, of which there was plenty, in large tin lamps made for the purpose. In the evenings old Andrew was generally employed in washing up and fixing things to rights, or in making or mending clothes for himself or Adam. He was always the last to go to bed on pretense that he had so much work to do in preparing for the mens' breakfast on the ensuing morning. After seeing all hands in bed and everything snug for the night, he would set the lamp on the corner of the trunk, read a chapter from the bible and say his prayers. To the credit of the men be it said, no attempt was made to molest poor Andrew in his religious exercises, all parties treating him kindly, and were it not for his own peevish temper would have passed his time pleasantly enough among them. During the day the men were employed in various occupations, some in sawing boards with a pit saw, some cutting firewood, some working in the carpenter shop and others in the fur store. It was very often hard work for the foreman to find work for such a number of men. Again some were sent out with dog sleigh to bring home fish from the other side of the lake.

One day Murdoch McLennan and myself were employed in sawing boards near the mens' house and after working a spell we concluded to go into the house and have a rest and smoke a pipe. On enter

ing we found no person in the house, Andrew being off feeding the cattle and the rest of the men out at work. Now was the time to prepare some mischief or other for the coming night, in the prosecution of which we mounted the rickety stair which led to the loft. The loft was the general receptacles for storing all sorts of things, such as trunks, boxes, old tracking lines and old worn out tin kettles The flooring of the loft was somewhat rotten, sundry large holes being in it. We set to work and cleared a passage from one end of the loft to the other, and having procured an auger we bored a hole through the loft opposite McLennan's bunk and another in the other end of the loft opposite my bunk. My French bedfellow happened at that time to be out on a three days trip, so for that time I slept alone. We then took a tracking line and stretched from one end of the loft to the other passing one end down thetauger hole into McLennan's bunk and the othre into my one. We then piled up a number of boxes one upon another in such a manner that a pin underneath supported the whole structure. A string made fast to the main line and then made fast to the pin finished that part of the work. We then took a half dozen old tin kettles and made them fast to the main line. All things being thus properly prepared we re urned to our work, keeping the whole plot a profound secret. Night came and passed off as usual About 11 o'clock all hands were tucked safely in bed and mostly asleep. with the exception of Andrew, who, according to custom went plodding about as usual, At length, having finished his day's labor, he sat down and read his accustomed chapter and then kneeled down by his box to pray He had not proceeded very far when McLennan gave a tug at his end of the line, which pulled away the pin and brought the pile of boxes with a crash. Old Andrew got up from his knees, trembling in every limb, and looking dumfounded, not knowing what to think. Some of the men turned over in their sleep and after giving a grunt or two went off to sleep again. Andrew, recovering from his surprise, returned to his knees again, when I lying on my back, began pulling vigorously at my end of the line, which caused the tin kettle to come dancing along the loft in a lively manner. This was too much for poor Andrew, he got up in a terrible fright and rushing to the bedside of Alex. Paterson the blacksmith, gave him a vigorous push exclaiming "Alick, Alick, for Gudesak rise, the deil's on the loft." The blacksmith who suspected that some mischief was on foot, got up, and, donning his breeches, demanded what was the row. And ew was in such a fright he could hardly tell, but thought there was something "uncanny on the loft." Some of the French who were about as superstitious as Andrew himself, began crossing themselves, muttering, "Mon Dieu, qu est qui ca." "Gim'me the lamp," said the blacksmith, taking it he mounted the ladder in order to investigate the matter.

He got astride a large hole in the flooring of the loft and peered around for the cause of the trouble. He, happening to look down, perceived old Andrew below intently gazing upwards. This was too good an opportunity to let slip. The blacksmith, pretending he saw something uncanny, began to tremble and finally out in great fear, "O Lord," at the same time letting go the lamp, which came down with a whack on Andrews snout, at the same time covering him from head to foot

with strgeon oil. Andrew set forth an unearthly yell, enough to awaken the dead, thinking no doubt that all the forces of Pandemonium were on top of him, the house was in darkness and for a time confusion reigned supreme, while we the two outhore, nearly killed ourselves trying to suppress our laughter. Poor Andrew, for a long time, firmly believed that the house was haunted with demons that night. Often was the blacksmith questioned as to what he saw that night on the loft, but he would only shake his head and remain mum as an oyster. For some time after neither Andrew nor any of the French could be induced to go alone up on the loft even in daylight, consequently the plot was never found out by Andrew or any of the Frenchmen.

Our time passed pleasantly enough at Norway House, although among such a number of men some ludicous jokes were played off amongst themselves, some of which I cannot forbear recording, as in a manner the recital of them will give an insight into the kind of life we led in a country which at that time was almost cut off from the civilized world. Our food at that time was plain enough, all of which was the product of that part of the country in which we happened to be located. Up in the western country, in and near the great prairies the principal food was prepared from the flesh of buffalo, which was either what was called dried meat or yet pemmican. Dried meat was prepared from the flesh of the buffalo, which was cut up in thin slices and dried in the hot summer sun. One would have thought that the flesh would get spoiled before it was dried in that manner, no salt being used, but such was not the case. The prairies unlike the wooded parts of the country, were totally free from flies of any description, and from this fact together with the exceedingly dry atmophere the flesh was dried to a crisp in a very short time, and perfectly sweet. But the chief mode of preperation was the pemmican, as being more compact and useful in travelling. The manner of preperation was this: The dried meat of which I have spoken, was dried to a greater degree when intended for the manufacture of pemmican, it was then laid on buffalo skins and threshed with flails until it was reduced to small pieces. The fat of the animal was melted in a large pot and when boiling hot the pounded meat was thrown in and stirred up, much in the same mode as porridge is made, and then poured into bags made from buffalo skin with the hair side out, and sewed up. The bags were then set aside until they were cooled down when the whole became a solid mass which could only be cut up with an axe. The bags of pemmican generally weighed from 90 to 110 lbs. When one got accustomed to it, this was excellent food, and the best that could be devised for a long trip with dog sleighs, as most of the Hudson's Bay Company's servants had to do. It could be used in several ways, it could be eaten just as it was chopped off with the axe, when a little flour could be added we generally fried some of it in a frying pan and stirred a little flour into it, this was called "Russeau." Again we used to boil it in a pot with some water and make a sort of soup from it, this went by the name of "Ribbaboo." But in any case pemmican was an excellent and strong food.

In the north and more colder part of the country, whitefish was the principal article of diet. This was what I was most accus-

formed to, as I was never much in the country of the buffalo. In this case we generally had pemmican for food in travelling, but when at the fort or port we had nothing but fish. We cooked them in various ways, boiled, baked or fried, but still it was fish and nothing but fish. Yet we lived very well upon fish provided we got plenty of them, but they were rather scarce at times. As for flour, we saw nothing of it, we had no bread of any kind except we happened to dream about it.

At some posts, however, each man at the Christmas holidays was allowed a quart of flour and some raisins or currants wherewith to make a plum pudding, and this was generally all the flour seen in a twelvemonth. But still we did not feel the want of it very much.

Speaking of plum puddings reminds me of an occasion at Norway House, when James Isbister and myself feasted on roast beef and plum pudding for more than a week. How this happened I will now endeavor to show. During the time that Sir George Simpson and the officers of the Hudson Bay Company were holding their yearly council it was customary to have a great dinner in honor of the governor on the Sunday on which these gentlemen were there. On this occasion, the time in which I was there, the governor and officers with most of the men of the fort went to church at Rossville, the Methodist missionery station, with the exception of Isbister and myself who preferred to stay at home and take a stroll through the woods along the bank of the river. After the people had all gone to church we took a walk out, and, as the day was fine, we wandered about until it was near noon. On our return back we happened to stray into the master's kitchen where the great dinner was preparing for the governor and his staff. On entering the place we found no person inside but we heard the cook in the dining room busily engaged laying out the table. Meanwhile I was carefully scanning the place all around when my eye happened to alight upon a large pot which was boiling on the stove with a stick across the top of it to which it appeared to me was something attached by a string. Anxious to know what this might be I raised the stick and found that there was something attached to the string resembling a Scotch haggi but in reality was a goodly plum pudding. There was no time to think in a case like this, presence of mind was what did the business here. Before one could say scat the plum pudding was out of the pot and ensconced in the lappet of my coat, and I was outside the door in a jiffy and off like a shot. Meanwhile my friend, Isbister, had discovered a goodly roast of beef in the oven, just cooked to a T, which he appropriated at once, and hurried after me to the boat shed, where we hid our booty into pile of lumber.

I immediately jumped into a canoe and paddled leisurely up the river, while Isbister ran into the mens' house, laid hold of his bible and sprang into his bed and in a moment was deeply engrossed in "searching the scriptures." Shortly after this the people were observed coming from church which the cook seeing, proceeded to "dish up." He went to the oven, but to his dismay, the roast of beef, like the riches of this world, had taken wings and flown away, he knew not whither. He next gazed into the pot but found it vacant. He stood amazed for a time, not knowing what to think, but the outrage committed in stealing the Governor's dinner leaving

him and his party nothing but potatoes and bread.

There was nothing more heard of the matter for some time, but eventually I found that although the crime could not be brought to Isbister and myself by substantial evidence, yet we were not above suspicion. A few days afterwards the Governor's departure took place, and every one, of course, went to the river bank to see him off. Before stepping into his canoe, the Governor went around shaking hands with everybody and saying goodbye. He shook hands with Isbister and then also giving me a shake of the hand said, "Good bye Stewart," and then added in a whisper, "Take care and don't steal any more plum puddings" This was an indication that we were suspected of committing the theft, and it must be confessed that the suspicions were not far astray, but for more than a week we had a change of diet, and many a hearty laugh over our adventure. This, in a measure, gives an insight into the character of Sir George Simpson. Had he not been at the fort at this time, there is no doubt but what it would have gone hard with us, but the Governor took a lenient view of the matter and treated the whole affair as a huge joke. But were it otherwise, and Mr. Barnseon, or any other Chief Factor, had full command we both would have been bundled off to Mackenzie river. This was to every young hand in the service a name of terror. Mackenzie river was, in the mind of a young fellow from the old country, a sort of Botany Bay, a place of banishment from all civilization. Several things conduced to this belief. First the treatment the young hands received on their twenty days, or more, journey from York Factory to Norway House, pictured in their minds what their miseries would be on a like journey which lasted for two months. Another thing which caused Mackenzie river to be dreaded by the youngsters was that it was a place where winter prevailed all around during the year without hardly a gleam of summer. These were no doubt grossly exaggerated but we believe it was held out as a threat to all defaulters.

The times of which I am now writing was long before the era of steamboats or railroads in this part of the country. St Paul, in Minnesota, was then only a hamlet of only half a dozen houses; the first trips made by the carts from Red River to the United States was to St. Peters, a small village somewhere on the Mississippi, frequently travelling or transporting goods from one place to another was not done so quickly then as now. News from England came but once a year; and that was when the Co's ships arrived at York Factory in the month of August. A small mail, chiefly letters to French Canadian servants of the Company, was brounht up by the Governor, Sir George Simpson, on his annual trip to the North west by canoe from Montreal. In addition to this there was a winter packet came up from Montreal about the end of the year, but this contained hardly anything else but letters connected with the business of the compasy and a few of the Montreal papers. Sometimes there came also some letters to the French servants from their friends in Quebec, but there came nothing from the old country only by the ship once a year. The servants of the Company who were in the Mackenzie river district and other distant places often did not receive their letters for perhaps two or three years after they were written.

The goods for those distant places took about the same time or longer to reach their destination.

Two brigades, each consisting of about six or or seven boats, left Upper Fort Garry, now Winnipeg, about the 10th of June and proceeded to Norway House, taking such furs or buffalo robes that had been collected at that place during the winter, together with the furs that came down from Fort Ellice and other points on the Assiniboine river, and proceeded to Norway House, north of Lake Winnipeg, where they unloaded their cargoes and took on board the goods which were destined for Mackenzie river. These goods had come out from England the year previous which had been brought up to this place by the Norway House boats. They also took the servants who had come out by the ship and wintered at this place who were ordered to go to Mackenzie river. These were the brigades I have already spoken of with whom I came up to Norway House. This river work was, as I have observed, a slavish occupation and those who made a business of it were soon broken down and became decrepipt old men before reaching fifty years of age. Yet during the voyage the French half-breeds seemed to enjoy it, the reason being, I suppose, that having passed the winter in a state of semi-starvation they now had an abundance of pemmican to feed upon. I have seen individuals who were as thin as a rail on starting off, come back at the end of the summer as fat and sleek as a well greased porpoise.

These brigades on leaving Norway House took their way north by ascending the Grand Rapids in the Saskatchewan river proceeding up as far as the Pas and Cumberland House. From there they branched off into the Rabbit and Sturgeon rivers, which brought them on as far as Isle la Crosse, at that time an important part of the Hudson Bay Company, and then from there unto the Long Portage, or height of land between the waters that flow east and those that flow north. Here the Red River brigades were met by the boats from Mackenzie river district when an exchange of commodities took place, the Mackenzie river boat taking the goods and the Red River boats the furs. Returning by the same route, the brigades came back to Norway House and passed onwards to York Factory, reaching there about the time that the ship from England arrived, which was usually sometime between the middle of August and the beginning of September. They then took the goods brought out by the ship for Mackenzie river district together with the new servants from Europe and came back to Norway House, where both the goods and servants were left to be kept there until the following spring. Taking the goods for the Red River district which had been left at Norway House by the York Factory boats, the brigades returned to Red River, arriving there about the middle of September or the beginning of October. Meanwhile the Mackenzie river boats had such a distance to go that they very often got frozen in before reaching their destination. And then that was not the utmost limit where goods had to be transported. To the most distant trading posts of the Hudson Bay Company it took three years from the time the goods left England until they reached their destination in the far north. It was no uncommon thing for boats to get frozen in before they could reach their point of debarkation, but these inconveniences were not so very serious after all. Each trading post

had generally a small stock of goods on hand to meet an emergency of this kind and as goods were of the same class year after year there was no danger of their becoming unsaleable on account of their getting unfashionable. Neither was their any loss to be apprehended from any opposite party coming with a large stock of goods to take advantage of the situation and reap the harvest. It is not very easy to compute the distance traversed by these brigades during their summer's voyage, but I would judge from a rough calculation that the distance traversed would be upwards of two thousand miles. Other stations on this side of the Rocky Mountains sent their own goods to York Factory and brought up their own goods in one season, with the exception of the Athabaska district. The boats from this part of the country could only come as far at Norway House, where their goods had been stored the previous year, and they, too, owing to the great distance they had to come, often had considerable difficulty in reaching home before the winter set in.

The most valuable furs, of course, were from the most northerly part of the country. From the Mackenzie river district were brought the finest furs of the silver and black foxes, together with the mink, marten and beaver, and also some fine otters. Much the same kind and quality were brought from the Athabaska and Great Slave Lake District. Further south viz., from Isle la Crosse, Cumberland, Norway House, Lac la Pluie and York Factory Districts the furs were about the same kind with the addition of the lynx, wolverine and badger, but these were a little inferior in quality. At York Factory besides furs, a considerable trade was carried on in whale oil, chiefly procured from the white whale which abound around the shores of Hudson Bay. The products of Saskatchewan and Swan river districts were chiefly buffalo robes, the skins of wolves, red foxes, cayotes, badger and other furs of inferior value. The boats from Saskatchewan, having no rapids or portages to encounter on their way down as far as Norway House, with the exception of the Grand Rapids, were only manned by three men in each boat. The bulky nature of the the products of that district, being chiefly buffalo robes, necessitated a large number of boats, hence the Saskatchewan fleet was the largest in the country, consisting of from forty to fifty boats. On their arrival at Norway House the greater part of the cargo was discharged there, and the men were taken to make up a brigade of from ten to fifteen boats, with the usual compliment of nine men to each boat. These boats proceeded to York Factory in order to meet the ship from England and bring up the goods required for the Saskatchewan district. This district was the chief place in the country for boat building, hence the surplus boats left at Norway House went to supply the other districts.

Having thus given a rough sketch of the manner in which merchandise was conveyed through the country, I shall now take a glance at the manner by which trade was carried on with the Indians. The use of money as the medium of exchange was here unknown, but in lieu there of a simple substitute was employed. The criterion of exchange was an imaginary standard termed "a skin," which represented a value of two shilling sterling On my first arrival in the country I recollect being rather non plussed when in

answer to the question what was the price of a certain otter a skin I was told that it was worth about two skins and a half. In some parts of the country, the Indian, when disposing of his furs at the Hudson Bay trading post, received in exchange a certain number of small sticks, or sticks of wood, each representing a skin. With these he made his way to the goode store and purchased the thing he stood in need of, giving in exchange the small sticks of wood he had received in exchange for his furs. One would imagine that by this mode of dealing there would be a fair field open for imposingon the red man, but this was not taken advandtage of by the officers or servants of the Hudson Bay Company, In all their dealings with the Indians everything was conducted in a straightforward and upright munner. There was no haggling over prices, or any endeavor made on either side to overreach one another. The Indians had full confidence in the moral rectitude of the Company's officials, and so far as I have seen or heard. this con0dence was never betr yed.

This system of upright dealing a c unts for the peaceable conduct of the Indians under the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company. While our neighbors across the boundary were having villages burned, women and children murdered and outrages committed by the red men, the scattered posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, each having only two or three white men to keep them, were resting in perfect security although surrounded by hundreds of Indians. The difference is easily accounted for. While the United States were making treaties with the Indians for their territory, the payments agreed upon were entrusted to the hands of rascally agents, whose extortions rivalled the worst kinds of Turkish Bashaws. The rascals cheated the poor Indians right and left, while they had no means of redress, for when they did apply to the the government that made the treaty with them, their complaints were disregarded. No wonder then that the poor Indian with starvation staring him in the face, took to commiting reprisals upon those who shamefully treated them and who had so little regard for solemn treaties. On the other hand the Indians knew that the word of an officer of the company was to be depended upon, and also that in case of distress. sickness, or old age, they could look with confidence to the company for help and support. I myself have had considerable experience among the Indians and have always found that, when treated fairly, one could hardly wish for kinder friends. An Indian detests duplicity and deception, and if such be once practiced upon him, it is very hard to regair his confidence. Ignorant persons—and it is only ignorant persons who will do so—will sneeringly allude to the Indian and half-breed, but for my part I earnestly wish that some white people whom I have known to my cost, were only in possession of half their good qualities in the matter of honest and upright dealings. It is often said that the company gave such a small value for the furs they received from the Indians. That is true no doubt, but I do not know that anyone in their place would have been more liberal in that respect. And had the Indians received three times more for his furs than he got, I do not think he would have been any better off. The people had no notion of economy, therefore it would matter very little what they got as it would be all spent, and instead of

being better off they would have been worse, as it would likely lead to lazy and indolent habits. As it was, however, these people had no cause for complaint, the company being ever ready to assist them when in difficulty. Under the mild rule of the company the Indians were happy and contented, having all the necessaries required for their mode of life.

In the event of a hunter being unsuccessful in his winter's catch of furs and thereby unable to purchase his outfit for the following season, the company was ever ready to advance with the things they stood in need of. There was very little danger of starvation in those days as game and fish were abundant, and the active Indians who were good hunters received a fair price for their furs. In the summer time when the hunting season was over they got employment with fair wages by engaging to work on the company's boat to York Factory. Then in the Saskatchewan and Swan River districts, buffalo were plentiful, which afforded food and remunerative employment to a great many persons both Indians and half-breeds. I remember when buffalo were plentiful in the vicinity of Pembina and Portage la Prairie, and even around the ridge where the Manitoba penitentiary now stands some stray ones were frequently seen. The season for hunting the buffalo was generally all the year around, excepting the time when the hunters came to Upper Fort Garry to trade off their robes and pemmican and purchase their necessary supplies. The winter time was the season for getting buffalo robes, as the hair of the animal was then in good condition. The flesh was used in making winter dried meat, that is, buffalo flesh made by being hung in the smoke of the tent, instead of being dried by the heat of the sun, as was done in the summer time. The dried meat cured in this manner was highly prized on account of the peculiar flavour imparted to it by the smoke, but it could not be kept so long safe and sweet as that which was dried by the sun. The summer and fall were the seasons for making pemican and dried meat for exportation. The skins in those seasons being unfit to convert into buffalo robes, were manufactured into leather for making moccasins, mittens, and dog harness.

A camp of buffalo hunters with their wives and families, and their outfits of horses and carts was a novel spectacle. I have frequently seen the ground now occupied by the city of Winnipeg covered with tents to the number of from four to five hundred. The community was a mixture of English and French half-breeds with a sprinkling of Cree Indians. Before leaving the settlement of Red River a Council was generally held and a captain was elected by ballot, whose business was to oversee and direct all matters in the camp to settle dirputes, regulate the time to start and encamp as well as to give the signal when to start in pursuit of the buffalo. During his term of office, the captain's word was law, and woe be to the man who dared to disobey it. Anyone who had the temerity to act contrary to the captain's order was summarily dealt with. The punishment for any act of wilful disobediance consisted of cutting the offenders saddle and harness to pieces, thereby disabling him from joining in the chase. When a herd of buffalo appeared all hands were in readiness and stood earnestly waiting on horseback the signal of the captain to make a start. Each man had his powder loose in his firebag, which was hung by his side, while he carried his mouth full of bullets. When the signal

was given there was a general stampede, in which the hunter who had the best horse stood the best chance of getting the best animal in the herd. Once in the thick of the buffalo, there was, as may be supposed, indiscriminate all around, but the danger of one hunter being apt to shoot another was not great as the hunter generally fired downwards upon the buffalo, the horses ranging alongside the buffalo, thus the danger of the balls flying around was greatly diminished. The gun used were the old flint lock style, and in rapid firing the hunter generally took some powder in his hand out of his hand without measuring it and put in the muzzle of his gun dropping a ball out of his mouth after it. No wads were used at that time.

The danger in hunting the buffalo lay chiefly in the horse stumbling, by his feet getting into a badger hole. In such cases the rider would be thrown a considerable distance and receive a severe shaking up, and often severe bodily injury. The hunter has been known to swallow his mouthful of balls when the horse happened to stumble. A great deal of jealousy sometimes existed among the hunters as to who had the fastest horse; those who were in possession of the best buffalo runners were considered people of some importance and various devices were resorted to in order to keep their horses up to the standard. Sometimes, too often, I believe, jealousy went so far as to try and injure a good horse, by such men as wished to be considered the possessor of the best buffalo runner. The general mode of proceedure was to stick a pin in the joint somewhere near the hoof by which means the animal would be lamed, and yet the cause of the lameness very difficult to find out and even if found out it would often be difficult to find out the perpetrator of the deed.

But the buffalo and the buffalo hunters are, however, now things of the past, and the quaint scenes connected therewith have passed away forever. The Urbans, Delormes, Grants, Hallets, Desjardins and many others I could name have gone to their rest. The only one now remaining of the old buffalo hunters is Pascal Breland, who was once a member of the Northwest Council, but is now living at Lake Dauphin. These roving denizens of the prairie lived a life of complete freedom, far beyond the bounds of civilization they passed their time free as the wild beasts they were hunting and had as little concern or thought for the morrow. No matter whether the hunt was a poor one or otherwise it was all the same, the proceeds from the sale of their buffalo robes, furs, etc., had to be expended as soon as received. I have seen some of these hunters go into the Company's office at Fort Garry and receive somewhere about nine hundred or a thousand pounds in his fist, and walk straight to the Company's sale store and spend every farthing of it. I have often been serving them in the shop by selling them cotton, cloth and other goods, when after buying a pile of stuff of one thing or another, they would ask how much was to pay, I would tell them the amount, they would throw me down the whole pile of money they had with instructions to help myself. I would then take out the required sum and hand the rest back, when they would go on buying again and so on until they had a sufficient stock of most things. It very often happened that when they had purchased all the supplies they stood in need of they had still some cash remaining. Taking

this sum and laying it by for a future day who never once thought of, the money had to be spent even if they had to buy things they did not want. Accordingly the possessor of the superfluous money would stand sometimes in a brown study debating in his mind as to what he would do with the rest of his money. Finally his eye would light on something he had not purchased, and whether of service or not, it was immediately purchased. This was the general custom until all the money had disappeared.

All their purchases having been made and the money all gone the next thing was to start off for the prairies again. Three or four weeks was a sufficient length of time to remain in the Red River settlement Their home was on the boundless prairies of the west and they longed to return to it.

The buffalo hunters, although chiefly French halfbreeds of the same stock as those who worked on the Company boats, were altogether different in their habits and bearing While the boatmen were a low type addicted to drunkeness and not a bit over scrupulous in the way of honesty, the buffalo hunters were more chivalrous and dignified in their manners, strictly honest and temperate. One would think that on coming in from the prairies they would be induced to go on a spree like their brethren wh when they came back from their summer trip wound up with a drunken carou al. But not so with the hunters, they never indulged in much drink, each principal hunter buying perhaps a gallon or half gallon of rum to take out with them for their winter supply but I never knew them indulging in a spree when in at the Company's fort. Having made this digression in these few remarks regarding the buffalo hunters, I will now return to Norway House and relate something more of life at that station.

As I have before observed, this fort was the general depot for men and goods, there being about sixteen Scotch lads from the Orkneys or from the Hebrides and about forty-five French from Quebec. These representatives of different nationalities had, as might be expected, several squabbles and differences which sometimes broke out into open violence. The Orkney men as a rule were better educated than the French, and were considered more trustworthy as servants, while very few of the French were able to read and were as a rule illiterate, and hardly as trustworthy as the Scotch. They were first class hewers of wood and drawers of water yet hardly to be depended upon in matters requiring fidelity and trustworthiness. They were moreover, very extravagant and fond of dress, their leggings, coats and caps were generally decorated with ribbons of every hue and colour in creation or yet ornamented with bead work As a natural consequence the natives of the Scottish Isles, being better educated than the French and equally hardy, and gifted with a greater power of endurance, attained positions in the service which the French were unable to fill.

This was the occasion sometimes of bitter hostility between the parties, which often resulted in a free fight, which generally resulted in favor of the Scotch. At some posts where the French were in the majority of four to one of the Scotch, they would try to domineer over the sons of Caledonia, but they sometimes carried the joke too far for their own personal comfort. Often when the Scotch blood was aroused the French found themselves

cornered. These disputes generally took place between the freshly imported young hands. The French, newly arrived from Quebec thought themselves very smart in a way, while the the hardy young Orcadian who hitherto had been cradled on the deep, was equally pugnacious, though not so overbearing, hence the disputes.

The tyrannizing propensities of the young Frenchmen was the cause of a fracas during my residence at Norway House The French trusting to their superior numbers proceeded forthwith to tyrannize over the Scotch lads. This was borne with patience for some time, although often they were treated as menials, but their insolence went on so far that patience ceased to be a virtue and endurance was no longer possible. It was, I think, in the month of November, that one of the Scotch lad being tyrannized over by a Frenchman, laid out his oppressor with a blow of his fist; this was exactly what he deserved, and the matter would have passed off without any further notice had not a couple of the other Frenchmen set upon the young Scotchman and began to kick him. This led to reprisals from the boys on our side, so the quarrel went on until every man on both sides was drawn into it. The result was that though the French were three to one of the Scotch, yet in about ten minutes the French were beaten and utterly demoralized. The Scotch had armed themselves with a good sized stick each and sailed in with a will that was irresistable. After this the French were as humble as one could wish, and, to the credit of the Scotch they never took any undue advantage of the situation. All they wanted was to live in peace with their fellow labourers and on an equality with them, and gave their opponents to understand that as long as they would not be molested, otherwise they would have to face the consequence. Among the Scotch was a little fellow named Willie Hourston, who was some thing of a Tartar in his way, whom the French had, from experience, a wholesale dread of, and after the above mentioned fight endeavored to court his favour on every occasion. Matters therefore after this went on smoothly enough for some time.

The servants of the Hudson's Bay that were brought from Scotland were mostly engaged to serve for five years, those from Quebec and Montreal for three years. The wages in those days were somewhat low being £20 for apprentice clerks, from £20 to £25 for carpenters and £17 for labourers per annum Out of this the men had to furnish their own clothing, tea, sugar and tobacco, and in most cases their own salt. Consequently the savings of a labourer, for his first contract of three or five years, were very small indeed, unless he exercised the strictest economy. After the first contract higher wages were usually given, especially to faithful and trustworthy men. Those of this character, who had a fair amount of education, had a good chance of rising in the service, by being put in charge of some outlying post and in such cases there were certain allowances granted in addition to the salary which enabled one to get along without having to spend much of his income.

A great many men remained for a considerable length of time in the company's service and some of them had saved quite a handsome lot of money, on retiring, which they carefully handled and kept them in comfort the remaining years of their life. Many of these old servants never returned to their native country,

but generally settled down in what was known as the Red River Settlement. The present inhabitants of the parishes of Mapleton, St. Andrew's and St. Paul's, in Manitoba, are chiefly decendants of these retired servants of the company.

But to return to Norway House. Shortly after we, the Scotch lads had this slight misunderstanding with the French, a party of the men at the Fort were told off to go to the lumber camp, which was about two days journey from the fort, and I myself happened to be one of the number. The most of the party were French, and I got along with them all right, and really spent a very pleasant time. The work was not very hard, and we had quite an agreeable company, so we were all right for the time being. The week before Christmas we were all ordered back to the fort for the holidays. At that time the servants got fourteen days holidays. Each man was allowed a pint of rum for Christmas and another for New Year's day. Usually we had a ball about that time but it was generally a one sided affair. We had plenty of room wherein to dance, and plenty of music, but there was a lamentable lack of the female element. There being only, I think, three French girls in the whole place, unless one went over to Rossville, where there were plenty of them, but they were not of that class fitted to grace a ball room. And besides all that, if the minister there at Rossville happened to spy one of the company's men over there he would make an eternal fuss over the matter. One reason of this was, perhaps, that, between Mr. Barnston and the clergyman there was very little love lost. Mr. Barnston was at that time a strong church of England man, and Mr. Mason was at that time a Wesleyan. Because of this although it was the duty of the missionary to hold service at the Fort every alternate Sunday afternoon, yet neither minister nor people seemed to hitch together. As for Mr. Barnston he conducted divine service himself every Sunday forenoon according to the litany of the Church of England, and as his authority was not to be lightly esteemed, every man at the fort attended, both Protestant and Catholic.

Shortly after Christmas, or rather between christmas and the new year, the packet arrived from Montreal with despatches from Sir George Simpson, the governor. The manner of sending up this packet was that a man was sent with it from Montreal to the nearest Hudson's Bay Fort, and from there another man was sent with a dog sleigh to the next post and so on from one post to another until it came to Norway House, where the mail was divided, one part of which was sent to York Factory and the surrounding country and the other part to Red River or upper Fort Garry, from where it was sent to Fort Ellice and the Saskatchewan district. Generally some of the French received letters from some of their friends in the provice of Quebec by this mail. At this time, however, their came some letter to some of them, and among the news they received was that a celebrated pugilist named, named Michael Nadeau had engaged in the company's service, and would be up with Governor Simpson's canoes in the spring.

This piece of news so elated the French that they began to poke fun at us Scotch boys, and prophesied that the day of paying up old scores was fast approaching and when the time did come, we would, of course, have to take a back seat. We

however, gave our opponents to understand, that we we had no intention of bidding good morning to the devil before we met him, and that until the arrival of this doughty warrior things must remain as they were, so for the time being that affair was settled.

The supply store for the servants of the Company was only opened once a year, so that by this means a man could not go to the store at any time and get what he wanted unless it was really something indispensible. Each man made a careful estimate as to what amount of tea, sugar, tobacco and clothing he required for the year, the list was handed in to the head fort of the district, and then each man received his portion. This refers to the men who were stationed at the outlying posts of a district; but those who were residents at a principle fort, such as Norway House, could go and select their own supplies, but, as in the case of the others, only once a year, which was generally in the month of April. This practice of giving out supplies at a certain stated time was a very wise regulation, as if the store was open at all times there would have been no end to the wants of some men, and in consequence with the small amount of salary they received they would soon involve themselves hopelessly in debt. It was an excellent method for teaching the men the principles of economy for as the servants received their accounts current each year, they knew exactly how much they had saved or expended, and by this means cut down their expense as much as possible. As a rule the Scotch were more economical in their outlay than their brethren the French. The former only purchased what was necessary and durable in the way of clothing, looking more to personal comfort than outward show; while the latter were more inclined to finery and gaudy adornment.

The general clothing worn by the employees of the Hudson Bay Company in those days consisted of trousers made of dressed deer skin, with a jacket or doublet of the same material, cloth leggings and the Hudson Bay coat or capot with a hood to cover the head in cold weather. The feet were protected by moccasins made of dressed moose skin, and instead of socks the feet were wrapped up in a thick cloth, called duffle, made for the purpose in England. The hands were protected by large mittens made of dressed moose skin and lined with duffle. These mittens were worn suspended around the neck by a string, which kept them convenient for slipping the hands in and out of them when required to arrange anything that might be required. The underclothing consisted of a flannel shirt, but no drawers were used, that being considered too cumbersome and heavy in running after dog trains or in working and chopping in the woods. The main object sought in winter clothing was lightness combined with warmth. To attain this, nothing was more suitable than dressed deer skin, on account of its lightness and impeviousness to the sharp, cold, cutting winds. Without this necessary protection a dozen cloth coats, if one could get them on, would not keep out the keen, cold winds. This was the general dress of the Hudson Bay Company's men in the winter season; but, of course, the appearance varied according to the taste of the wearer. Some of the men would take no pains to make any display in their dress; while others would have their coats, moccasins mittens, leggins and caps gaily adorned

with fancy coloured ribbons and bead work. The French and natives were peculiar in this respect; so much so that they would forcibly remind one of a harlequin's outfit. They would have a stream of many coloured ribbons flying from their caps and from the hoods of their capot, while the same was hanging from the garters that suspended their leggings which were richly adorned with bead work. Yet a Frenchman or halfbreed, when arrayed in all his toggery, no doubt thought himself a veritable Beau Brummel.

In connection with this love of display I cannot help recounting a laughable incident which took place during my residence at Norway House. It was in the month of April, that the men at the port had received their supplies from the store, when in the afternoon, Isbister and myself happened to come into the mens' house from some work we had been at. Sitting down to have a rest we observed two Frenchmen admiring some new suits of clothing that they had just takken from the store, which clothing they seemed to be busily engaged in adorning with ribbon. While they were thus employed in attaching some highly colored ribbons to their coats and caps, we two were sitting at the for end of the house quietly smoking our pipes apparently oblivious to anything going on around us. However when the two Frenchmen had finished their work and were holding up their coats and cap in admiration, we two rose up and drew near to join in eulogy. We said nothing for a little, being as it were lost in admiration at the gaudy display, but at length Isbister wondered how he would look in a coat like hat. "Try it on," said one of the Frenchmen. This was just what was wanted. The coat was put on Isbister, with the cap, when all present declared that he looked really well in that dress, with the exception of myself, who declared that all that Isbister wanted was a pair of red stockings to make him a complete merry Andrew. "Now," said I, "suppose it was I that had that coat and cap on there would be something to look at, I being a much better looking man than Isbister.' "Put on mine," said the other Frenchman, which I according did. This being done we both got into high words as to which was the most noble looking when being grieved at the sarcastic remarks of Isbister, I gave him a vigorous kick in the fleshy part of his posterior and then fled out at the door, closely pursued by Isbister. I saw no chance of escape but by jumping into a pond of muddy water which lay out in front of the men's house, making sure that Isbister would not follow me there. Vain hope! My relentless pursuer jumped in after me, and seizing hold of me threw me down amongst the mud and water where he took a delight in rolling me around. This raised my wrath considerably, and by great exertion I got on top of Isbister and packed him down in the mud and water where I nearly choked him. After a while I let him up and we both came into the house, savagely threatening to knock each other into the middle of next week. We were that much excited that we each took off our coats and threw them wildly into the farthest corner of the house, and made active preperations for a fight, whereupon some others of the Scotch lads interfered and by great persuasion got us pacified, and by this means prevented what might have been a very serious affair. This tickled the French wonderfully, who would willingly have sacrificed the two coats to have seen the two friends fight, but as the two friends them

selves had hardly any intention of coming to blows, that satisfaction was denied them, but the two coats and caps were like Mansie, Horrays stack of corn, 'past redemption.'

As the spring came on preperations were being made for the summer's work. The carpenters were busy patching up and repairing boats, while some of the men were sent on trips after the Indians, while at the same time a great many of the Indians were coming in to the fort with their winter's supply of furs. I was about this time sent out with an Indian on a trip on snow shoes. We visited several camps of Indians and had a very good time on the whole. We had a train of dogs each and there were four dogs on each sleigh. I liked walking and running in snowshoes very well, but I cannot say that I admired driving dogs, it seemed to be the cause of too much profanity One who wishes to learn to swear in French language, I would advise him to take about a week's journey with dog sleighs and I will guarantee that he will acquire that accomplishment to perfection.

On my arrival back to Norway House I found that four of my companions, who had come out with me on the ship, had arrived from Oxford House, where they had been left the preceding fall on their way up from York Factory. They were accompanied by an old hand named Murdoch McLeod, who had been in the company's service for upwards of forty years, most of which time he had been in British Columbia. My friend Sloper also came with the party. Now both McLeod and Sloper were somewhat remarkable characters in their way, both being pretty much addicted to telling some wonderful stories, and having very few scruples in drawing the long bow. Now in meeting with such characters I, as a rule, never attempt to contradict any story they may chance to relate, however extravagent or unreasonable they might be. There was, however, a marked difference between Sloper and McLeod. McLeod would brook no contradiction in anything he might say, no matter how unlikely his narration might be For instance, according to his account, British Columbia was a country equal to the Garden of Eden, if not superior to it. He would never cease lauding that country to the skies and woe be to the individual who had the temerity to doubt his word in the matter. Sloper on the other hand had a very high opinion of his own abilities and prowess, but anyone who chanced to contradict him in his strange adventures he would simply look upon such a one as unworthy of his notice and would inwardly despise him for his ignorance. Now when we left the old country very few of the young fellows who came out with us on the ship could boast of having a watch, with the exception of my friend Sloper and two or three others. But this watch of Sloper's was really a wonderful piece of mechanism, the sun and moon might err in making their usual rounds, but Sloper's watch, never. The first yarn he told me when we met was about this self-same watch, that it had never stopped going from the day he left Stromness to this very day To show the good qualities of this wonderful timekeeper he related that he was sent out to the woods at Oxford House shortly before Christmas to cut some firewood, and while doing so he got so warm at his work that he slipped off his coat and vest, in the pocket of which was his watch, and hung these garments on the branch of a tree,

Shortl afterwards there came a messenger from the fort with peremptry orders to return to the fort as he was wanted immediately. He started for home forgetting all about his coat and vest which he had hung to the branch of a tree. He was not allowed to go back to the woods again until after the Christmas and New Year, which was about two months after he had left his clothes there. He was sure that by this time his watch would be ruined as the weather was between forty and fifty below zero most of the time, but what was his astonishment to find that the watch was still ticking on as lively as a cricket and had not lost a second of time since it was hung there

"But who wound it up in the meantime," asked Snipe, the tailor.

"Hold your tongne, you impudent young whelp," retorted the blacksmith, "cheeky young brats like you would spoil any story by your foolish questions."

The sun was now getting somewhat strong, consequently there was every appearance of spring. The wild geese were beginning to fly northwards and every one who was the possessor of a gun was on the alert for some fresh meat. McLeod among the rest got his shooting iron in order, and as luck would have it, shot the first goose of the season. This was some thing to be proud of He was as full of fun as a young kitten and gave us all a very elaborate account of how he managed to get the prize. He plucked the goose and having cleaned it very nicely had it hung up by a string in front of the chimney in which was a blazing fire—there was no stoves employed in those days—Murdoch McLeod having placed a plate underneath his goose to catch the gravy, sat beside it giving the string a turn now and again so that all the parts might be equally cooked, complacently looking forward to having an enjoyable supper. The rest of the men in the house were busying themselves about one thing and another, while Isbister and myself were sittting together at the farther end of the room from Murdoch, filling our pipes preparatory to having a comfortable smoke. We were whispering a few words to each other, when one of the men near us remarked:

"The devil has some business on hand Isbister and Stewart are whispering together."

We scorned to make a reply to this insolent remark, but shortly after I got up and walked to the chimney where McLeod was cooking his goose, in order to light my pipe, which having done I sat down on the form behind McLeod and in a little while ventured to say that there were no wild geese in British Columbia. McLeod turned around and asked me in the name of his Satanic Majesty who told me that. I meekly replied that I had read several authors and I never met with one yet who ever mentioned the fact of wild geese being there, which I believed to be true. From one thing to another we both got into a very hot discussion over the matter McLeod maintaining that there were wild geese there, while I was quoting author after author who had no existence save in my own fertile brain to support my argument. During this time McLeod had become totally oblivious of his roast, so much so that Isbister, who had come to the chimney to light his pipe, cut the string with his pen-knife, and having placed the goose in the lappet of his coat walked outside and hid it in some corner and returning into the house resumed his seat without McLeod having once observed

him. Shortly afterwards I terminated the contest by allowing McLeod to have his own way, and retired from the scene of the contest. McLeod proceeded once more to turn the string by which his supper had been suspended, but, of course, the goose had vanished, the dear knows where I have, yet in my mind's eye the blank look of astonishment depicted on McLeod's face when he found nothing but a piece of the string remaining. The joke was too good for any of the men to peach on Isbister, so, of course, nobody took notice of the flight of the goose. As for myself I said that I thought I saw something go out at the door, but whether it was a man or a goose I really had no recollection. McLeod however, got raging mad and began to swear like a trooper, and actually got outside on the platform, dashed off his cap and danced with rage, but the trouble was that he could not suspect any person. After swearing awhile he calmed down somewhat, but, poor fellow, he never saw his goose again.

Time rolled on and the month of June brought to Norway House a great number of boats from different parts of the country namely from Lac la Pluie, Fort Ellice, Saskatchewan District, Cumberland and various other parts bringing the officers of each fort to the yearly council held at Norway House on the arrival of the Governor, Sir George Simpson. Somewhere I think about the middle of June, Sir George Simpson arrived with his fleet of four canoes from Montreal, manned by Iroquois from the Province of Quebec, together with about five or six young Frenchmen as servants. Of course we young Scotch lads were anxious to see the man was to knock us all into a cocked hat on his arrival. Consequently when the news came that the Governor was coming down the river, everyone hastened down to the river to see him land. As soon as the canoes touched the shore the crews jumped out and commenced unloading their cargoes while the governor was employed in shaking hands with every one of us great and small. Amoeg the company who arrived in the canoes I noticed a stout raw boned Frenchman, making himself very conspicuous by his swaggering airs, and stood sometimes looking at the crowd of us on the bank with a sort of disdainful sniff. I was mentally wondering in my mind who this pompous individual might be when one of the Frenchman of the fort whispered to me that this was none other than the redoubtable Michael Nadeau I did not feel very much startled ove the news, but concluded to wait f· develope ments. They came sooner than I expected. On the morrow Hourston and myself were coming from the fur store, where we were engaged packing furs, to our breakfast, when we were met by this newly imported champion.

We politely wished him good morning to which he replied with a sort of half grunt. He immediately turned to my friend and asked him if his name was Hourston. My friend meekly replied that it was.

"Well, I understand," said he, "that you have been looking for me."

"I was not looking for you very much in particular," replied Willie, "yet nevertheless I am always glad to meet with a good man."

"Take care," said Nadeau, "you had better keep yourself quiet, you are no match for me."

"Weel, weel," said Willie, "that may be

but we dinna ken muckle aboot that till we try."

By this time all hands understood that there was something astir, and in a little time the belligerents were surrounded by a crowd of Scotch and French from the house.

Nadeau made a blind rush at Hourston but somehow his left ear happened to run against Hourston's fist and the shock, I suppose caused him to fall on his back. This trifling accident seemed to ruffle his temper considerably, and getting up in a rage, made a blind rush to catch Hourston by the throat, but a well directed blow into the bread basket by Hourston's fist laid him on the ground limp as a bagful of old clothes. This was the finishing touch, he lay senseless for a time, when Hourston turned calmly around to the French and said:

"Boys, tak' up yu'r man, I think he is rather sick."

The French looked crestfallen, they saw that their hopes of supremacy were blasted forever. The great Michael Nadeau hod met his match and got the worst of it.

On the day following that event, Hourston and I were proceeding to our work in the fur store, as usual, and on our way passing the master's house, we observed Chief Factor L—— a big burly English, man taking a quiet walk in front of the building. On perceiving us he called out in a stentorian voice:

"Hi, boys come here.'

On our approach he thus addressed Hourston, "Well, Willie, you thrashed that Frenchman yesterday."

"O'aye," replied Willie, "that was not very hard to do."

"Tell me about it" quoth Mr. L——.

Hovrston proceeded to give a circumstantial account of the whole affair, and wound up by saying, "He tried to grip me by the throat, when I up with my fist and gave him one like that," at the same time suiting the action to the word, he planted a double header into the pit of Mr. L— 's stomach, which sent him sprawling over the sidewalk. This was ocular demonstration with a vengeance, with which Mr. L—— was more than satisfied. As a rule it indicates supreme pleasure when people are more than satisfied with anything, but in this instance the reverse was the case.

Mr. L—— gathered himself to his feet, swearing black and dire vengeance, and threatening all sorts of punishment, rushed off to lay a formal complaint before Sir George Simpson.

Sir George, when he had heard the whole story, lay back in his chair and laughed heartily. He congratulated Mr. L—— on the truthful, as well as striking manner, in which the victory over the Frenchman had been communicated to him, but that really he himself did not see his way clear to punish a servant for so forcibly setting forth the truth Sir George said, however, that he would see Hourston about the matter.

Accordingly in the evening when returning from work, we noticed Sir George Simpson walking in front of the officers quarters, seemingly in a brown study. He observed us, however, and called us to him. He was a very affable man and generally spoke in a very low voice.

"Well, Hourston," said he, "I believe you thrashed that Frenchman yesterday."

"Yes, si ," said Willie, "I gi'ed him a sma' lesson."

"Come and tell me all about it," said Sir George in a half whisper.

Willie related the circumstance in much the same manner as he had done to Mr L——, but when he came to clinch his narrative with an offhander, Sir George was off like a rocket On getting sufficient space between himself and Hourston, he turned around and smiled, and asked, Willie if he took him to be such a d——d fool as Mr. L——.

"It is all right, however," said he, "the story is very well told, and I am sure a glass of brandy might wind up the matter now."

He invited us into his office and we drank his health in a very becoming manuer. There is no doubt but that had Sir George stood his ground when Hourstdn was describing how he disposed of the Feench man, he would have received the same discipline that was meted out to Mr. L—— Ye Sir George Simpson was respected by all the servants of the compa y. In fact he was the beau ideal of a good master, kind and considerate to all under his charge, more especially to the laboring class of the community. If any dispute would arise between a master and one of his servants, Sir George would invariably take the part of the servant. He was fond of a rich joke, and enjoyed it none the less when perpe rated on himself In those early days some of the masters or chief traders got the name of being rather inclined to tyrannize over their servants, but in nine cases out of ten the fault lay with the class of servants with which they had to deal.

The masters who bore this character were mostly of the old school descendents of the Montreal Northwest Fur Company who in the early days had only French Canadians and Iroquois to deal with, as servants, were under the impression that all servouts we.e serfs and would submit to any indignity because their French servants would do so. Sometimes a master would try to administer a little chastisement to a servant, but it was often not very safe to try this upan the Scotch lads as they had an inveterate habit of returning the same with interest. But that rarely caused any permanent ill feeling between the parties.

The only instance of a game of fisticuff between master and man that came under my own personal observation was in this wise:

A brigade of boats while on the way from Lac la Pluie, had landed one morning for breakfast, and mostly all hands were on shore busily employed in cooking. A young Orcadian, one of the hands on the master's boat, was still on board together with the master's cook, a dapper little Frenchman. Somehow the two quarrelled over something, when the Orcadian grabbed the cook by the nape of the neck and the seat of his breeches and threw him over the stern into the water. The cook scrambled to the shore, nothing the worse saving for a good ducking, but when the Orcadian jumped on shorr he was confronted by his master, who proceed to correct him for trying to drown the cook. A free fight ensued, in which the master being a fat, heavy man, came off second best.

He, however took his befeat in good humor and straightway treated the cook to a stiff glass of brandy, which in those

days was a panacea for all sores there being no temperance lecturers in the rank the company. The master and the Or man were fast friends after that little episode,

During the time that Governor Simpson and the several officers of the Hudson's Bay Company remained at Norway House there was no want of amusement. The banks of the river were lined with encamp ments of boats crews from almost every part of the country, with the exception of tho Mackenzie River Disrict. The crews were a strange mixture of Orkneymen, Scotch Highlanders, French and Engli-h halfbreeds and Cree Indians. They were, indeed, a motley crew, and while remain ing at Norway House, had nothing to do but to engage in feats of strength and agil ity, sing songs and gamble with cards and dice. Most of the French were good singers and were the principal songsters of the multitude that were gathered together there.

After the Council was over Sir George Simpson sometimes went to Yo k Factory and at other times visited Red River, be fore his return to Montreal, but chiefly to the latter place, as he was generally called upon by the settlers along the banks of the Red River to settle some difficulty or other.

After the departure of the Governor each brigade of boats took their way homewards, and with them went all my comrad tha came out with them th ship. There were none sent out to Mac kenzie River that year some went to British Columbia, some to Athabaska Cumber and and Lac la Pluie. I only, was left of all of them. The furs being all packed up and sent away, I was taken by Mr. Barns ton to work in the garden. This pleased me very much, the work was not hard, and I had ample time for study. Mr. Barnston and family were often in the garden and would chat pleasantly with me As for Mr. Barnston himself, he often worked with me and was always imparting some useful knowledge to me. He was well versed in etomology and would spend a great deal of time in telling me the habits of the different insects we met with in the garden. In fact Etomology was his hobby and I am afraid I imposed a good deal on the old gentleman on that account. For instance he would come out into the gar den seeming in a great hurry to have something or other done, and would make me work pretty hard—a little more than I cared for.

When I found myself getting a little tired I would call Mr Barniston's attention to some worm or another on the ground This was quite enough for my master, he would immediately set down on a bench which was in the garden, and proceed to give me a full history of said insect from the cradle to the grave and forget all about tho hurry he was in, while I sat beside him with open mouth taking in all he said mentally wishing that his recital would last till meal time, which very often it did On a very cold day, Mrs. Barnston would call me in and give me a glass of brandy which was very acceptable sometimes, not that I was a lover of strong drink, I took it when it was needed like other gifts of Divine Providence, using it but not abusing it We had no temperance lectur ers in those days and we had no confirmed drunkards. People were something like Boaz, they ate and drank and when their heart was merry they laid down to rest.

I now began to think I was going to be

kept a Norway house as a sort of protegee of Mr. Barnston, but I was mistaken. On the 28th of August 1852, I received order to embark for Beren's River within an hour. This may seem to my readers as something suspicious that I was to be bundled off in so short a time, and I daresay some will think I had committed some fault when ordered off so summarily, but this was not the case. This was the general custom in the Company's service. It resembled being in the army or navy, not one could be sure how he was to be disposed off while at the Company's forts. One received his orders and had to obey.

At that time I had never heard of Beren's River, and wondered in my own mind where it was, whether I had any portages to encounter in getting there and what were the characters of the men I had to take passage with. On enquiry I found that Beren's River was not far from Norway House, being merely an outpost of that district and situated halfway between that place and Red River, on Lake Winnipeg, and that there were no rapids, portages nor tracking on the way thither. I further learned that the post was in charge of an Orkneyman named Robert Cumming

I immedirtely got my traps put together and after bidding good bye to my many friends at Norway House, I got on board the boat destined for Beren's River. I found that the crew consisted of Indians with the exception of the skipper, who was an Orney half-breed named Thomas Harper, and son-in-law of Mr Cummings I felt sorry at leaving Norway House, where I had spent a year so happily and where I had formed so many acquaintances.

But then all my comrades who had come out with me in the ship, were gone, and even if I had remained there were more to be seen, so upon the whole I rested content with my lot whatever it might be. As for the place I was going to, as might be expected, I knew nothing about it, but then it was not my first time to be thrown alone among strangers and worked my way, and why not now? I learned from Thomas Harper that Beren's River was a small place where only three men were kept. That at present there were only two, that was Harper himself and an Orkneyman named William Waters

We left Norway House about noon and got up as far as Playgreen Lake where we encamped for the night This Lake is immediately north of Lake Winnipeg from which it is separated by a short channel, dotted with a few islands, near which old Norway House was situated but now called Warren's Landing

On the next night we got into Lake Winnipeg, which at first sight looked like an open sea. We reached the first point at the entrance of the lake on the east side which is called Montreal Point, the point opposite to it on the west side is called Mossy Point. We had to encamp at Montreal point on account of the wind being too adverse and blowing very strong. On this account we had to remain here for three days. On the fourth day the wind set in good and fair and getting underway sailed on to the Spider Islands wherewe we encamped for the night, as the wind began to blow pretty strongly However, it did not take me long to discover that Mr. Harper was not much of a sailor, being too timid. If the wind blew a little fresh he was afraid of a storm coming, and when it was calm he was sure by the look of

the sky that it was going to blow, so in consequence between the two we made but slow progress.

We lay at the Spider Islands for three days. The weather was fair most of the time, but Mr. Harper was a great sky reader and held that it was going to blow hard. I had no doubt about his prognostications of a storm if we would wait long enough for it But while the weather was fine we could see no reason why we did not proceed and get on as far as we could But still I did not trouble myself about the matter, one place was as good as another to me, so long as I had plenty to eat and little to do it did not much matter where I was. It was quite a difference from my trip up the rivers from York Factory, our Indian crew were peaceable and honest and for the time being I was quite at home among them. We had no tracking to do, portages to cross and no heavy loads to carry. The Indians having plenty to eat and did not wish to hurry. Our skipper took things very coolly, then what was I that I should complain?

However after ten days from leaving Norway House we arrived at Beren's river where I was kindly received by Mr. Cummings, whom I found to be a kindly old gentleman who had been in the Company's service for over forty years. I was not long with him before I found that he was very intelligent and had a fund of information with regard to the Company's service in olden time when the keen competition was carried on between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal. He came out from the old country, somewhere about the year 1812 or 1813, at least it was during the latter years of the French war, as he told me they were chased by a French privateer on their way across the Atlantic. At the time of my arrival at Beren's River he was about sixty-five years of age, but still hale and vigorous. We arrived at Beren's River about four o'clock in the afternoon and Mr. Cummings kept me with him until daylight of next morning. I then went the men's house as it was called, and threw myself on the bed where I slept till nearly noon.

The only white man at Beren's river, apart from Mr Cummings, was one William Waters, a man from Kirkwell, Orkney, a shoemaker by trade. He was a dapper little fellow, with any amount of language, rather addicted to setting forth his own exploits. But, however, that did not concern me much, I let my new friend do the speaking while I sat and listened at the same time wondering what sort of a life was to have at this place.

At first it seemed to me that it was going to be a lonely spot, but that did not trouble me much, I had several books, Mr. Cummings had a number more, and the master himself, being quite an intelligent conversationalist, I soon found myself at home.

The occupants of the mens' house were Thomas Harper and his wife and two children, together with W Waters and myself. In the masters house their resided Mr. Cummings his wife and two grown up daughters, and a son about ten years of age These all comprised the effective strength of the Fort.

Beren's river is situated on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, which place was one prettiest and most picturesque spot around the Lake. The Hudson's Bay post is situated inside of a deep bay almost landlocked with the river flowing down the centre of the bay. The bay was dotted all ove

with a number of small islets, each one adorned with a tuft of spruce trees, looking very pretty in the summer time. The ground all round, however, is very rocky being nothing but beds of granite with mossy marshes in the lower parts covered with stunted spruce In a place like this any attempt at agriculture is out of the question. There was a little garden at the place, but the soil was nothing but white mud which would hardly raise anything. As a consequence, at the time of my residence there it was a poor place in the way of living.

At seasons there were plenty of fish and that constituted our only diet. But there were some seasons when the catch of fish was wonderfully small and such cases as that the only thing left for us to do was to tie our belts tighter over our abdomen and dream of home, bread, butter and roast beef.

I found that at Beren's river one came more in contact with the Indians. The only Indians at Norway House were those living at Rossville, the Methodist mission a y station, and these were in a manner civilized being brought under the influence of the gospel and had cast aside and forgotten their heathenish rites of worship. At Beren's River it was quite the reverse, here the Indians were more numerous, and besides they were still in a state of ignorance with regard to the Christian religion. I was going to say they were still uncivilized, but that would be saying too much. Civilization is an abstract term which may be employed in various ways. If I were asked whether in a time of trouble and anxiety would I rather trust o the Indian converted to christianity, for true friendship or to the wild untutored heathen at the risk of being consumed by public opinion, I would unhesitatingly prefer fall into the hands of the unconverted Indian.

I do not deny that much good has been done amongst the aborigines in Rupert's Land by faithful workers in the cause of Christianity, yet, no unprejudiced persons who is at all acquainted with the circumstances I speak of can deny that the Indian in addition to learning christianity, has also learned enough of the white man's vices almost if not wholly to counterbalance any good he might have imbibed. There have been many bright examples of christianity among the Indians that have come under my own observation, yet when one comes to compute the amount of money that has been spent in the endeavor to convert the aborigineee of Rupert's Land, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that the result has been very barren indeed. That is in real *bona fide* conversions.

I had no sooner got settled at Beren's River than I had to go to work, and at this time it was nearly all in the water, having to go out fishing every day. We had skiffs and birch bark canoes, but after going out in the canoes, I preferred them, they being lighter to handle, and much safer in a heavy sea on the lake than a flat bottomed skiff.

I well remember the first time I tried to navigate a birch bark canoe. It was at Norway House when one beautiful afternoon a few of the young hands at the fort took it in their heads to have a trial in working a birch bark canoe. I went among the rest, and after parting my hair in the middle and seeing my pockets were perfectly balanced. I went on board of a canoe and shoved off from land. By keeping pretty well balanced I managed to paddle out into the bay so the longer I worked I felt more confident in my skill as a canoe

man. But sitting down in the bottom of the canoe did not suit me, it was too humble a position for me. True, everybody who worked in a canoe sat thus, but I made sure I could do better, therefore, in order to show off my agility stood up in my frail craft, and proposed to paddle while in this position. But, lo! and behold, the canoe shot from under me as if I had been standing on a blown bladder, while I took a dive headformost into the water. On coming to the surface I perceived my canoe floating right side up some distance from me. I managed to get to the shore all right while some of the others who were in the bay brought my canoe to land. But this little episode cured me of any desire to show off any more new tangled operation in paddling a canoe. The old way was the best way after all.

From the fact that the post at Baren's River was so much enclosed by the land we had a long way to row out to the fishing grounds on the lake. Therefore on windy days when the water was rough it was no small undertaking to get out to our nets but in calm weather it was not so bad. I found that at this place we were confined to two meals a day, a white fish being the allowance each man at a meal. This was plenty of fish no doubt, but where was the bread or potatoes? Alas, there was none of either, so in consequence it was fish for breakfast, ditto for supper and ditto for next morning at breakfast again. The reason that we had only two meals a day was because we had no time to take any more, having to start out to the lake immediately after breakfast and as a rule did not return until late in the evening so unless we took our dinner and supper on top of each other we had no other way of making three meals a day. However it is wonderful how soon I got used to it and through time never took a thought of it. Salt was a scarce article at that time. Each servant of the company was allowed one quart of salt per year, for which he had to pay eighteen pence, or thirty-six cents. Sugar was more easily obtained than salt, as each man was allowed of that commodity twelve pounds a year, at the moderate price of one shilling a pound. Our yearly allowance of tea was four pounds a year at two shillings a pound. Our general mode of cooking whitefish was at breakfast by boiling them, and, when boiled, empty the whole affair, fish liquor and all into a tin dish, throw a sprinkling of salt thereupon and seizing our spoons fell to without ceremony. At supper time, having a little more time on our hands, we were a little more particular. After having taken the scales off our whitefish and the entrails taken out, we had it carefully washed. We attached a stout cord to the tail and hung it up in front of a blazing fire in the chimney, where it hung until it was nicely done brown.

The surplus fish we caught were by no means thrown away. We had a lot of hungry dogs to feed during the summer which were kept at the post during the winter winter drawing the sleighs when out visiting the Indians. At Norway House there were generally kept from fifty to sixty dogs. These were not kept at the fort during the summer.

The dogs were sent to a distant island in the lake where they were kept by an Indian whose employment was to fish for the sole benefit of the dogs. When in the fall the ice became sufficiently strong enough for

them to walk upon they were returned to the fort. The dogs of the Hudson's Bay Company were of a nondescript breed. From the Indian cur to the Esquimeaux sledge dogs they were of all shapes and sizes. In fact they were a mongrel breed At Beren's River we had about thirty dogs which required a good many fish to support. Again if we had more fish than the dogs could eat we had always a crowd of Indian women and children around the post who were ready to snatch up anything in the way of surplus fish that might be lying around. Sometimes the weather was so rough that we could not go out to the nets. In a case like that, instead of our usual grantum of fish diet, we generally took an extra smoke of tobacco and laid down in sweet contentment and moralized upon the uncertainity of all things, especially the weather.

The dogs in the old Hudson's Bay Company times, and are yet put to more uses than travelling in trading with Indians. In places where no cattle or horses were kept they did duty in hauling firewood and even building logs. I have seen three dogs haul a stick out of the woods which would be quite a pull for a couple of oxen. In this way we had to haul our firewood chiefly at Beren's River. We had a few cows here I think two or three and a bull. I used to draw wood with the bull, but he was a rather unmanageable beast, and we had not a few quarrels, for he had a custom on the road homewards to set off at full tilt, and very often leave the load of wood scattered here and there by the roadside. The dogs were more tractable and would at all times bring the load home in safety. My chief work, however, at Beren's River was fishing. I liked the business very well only we had very rough weather on the lake, sometimes, which was troublesome as well as dangerous; for after a storm we were used to find our nets full of driftwood and rotten sticks which took us sometime to clear out. In the fall of the year we used to catch a great many ducks in the nets who in diving after the fish got entangled in the nets.

In the fall of the year when the cold weather set in we took up the nets and waited until the ice set fast and then went to work and set our nets under the ice, which was done in this fashion: As soon as the ice on the lake was strong enough to bear us up we took our dogs and sleighs and went into the woods and got a goodly number of pine boughs which we planted in the ice on the lake about fifty yards apart, which was to guide us in and out to the fishing grounds which we ran out nine or ten miles out into the lake. Without this precaution we would certainly lose our way in stormy weather when the snow drifted so much that we could hardly see fifty yards ahead of us.

The manner of setting our nets under the ice was by cutting holes in the ice about five or six feet apart and then passing a long pole under the ice to which was attached a line. This pole was then shoved from one hole to another under the ice while the line was drawn under to the length of two nets. After this being done the nets were made fast to the end of the line, while one man took the line on his shoulder and walked along on the ice, while the other man payed out the nets. The middle holes made in the ice which were made to pass the line from one end to the other were not used after this, only the two end holes were opened every

day in order to examine the nets and take out the fish. At the main end where the nets were drawn up and the fish taken out were a number of poles set in a circle in the ice around the hole over which was thrown a leather or buffalo skin tent to protect us from the piercing wind while taking up the nets for this had to be done with the bare hands. When the nets were to be drawn out the holes were opened at both ends, the line made fast to the end of the nets while the other end of the line was made fast to a stick to prevent it slipping into the water and thus losing the chance of getting our nets set again. After the nets were overhauled and the fish taken out, one man went and hauled on the line while the other set the net. We had generally twelve nets in the water, with six sets of holes to attend to. Two of these nets were taken in every day to be washed and mended so that each set got washed and mended once a week.

The ice here generrlly set fast about the tenth of November and our fishing season for the winter was from that time until the middle of February. From the middle of February until the break up of the ice in the spring was the season for travelling in looking after the Indians, and seeing what the chances were of a good season for furs, for this was the main object for which we were there.

Fishing in winter was rather a slavish occupation; On account of the great distance we had to go we had to get up about four o'clock in the morning and mend our nets during which time the kettle was on the fire with a whitefish for each which was cooked during the time we mended our nets. As soon as we had hurriedly finished our meal we hitched up the dogs and started out. No matter what the weather was we had to face the storm. On some occasions it was an utter impossibility to reach our destination, one way or another, without freezing some part of our hands or face. The least exposure of ears nose or hands rendered them liable to be nipped by the frost. At times our faces would be striped like the skin of a zebra with places where the frost had caught hold of us. My ears and nose generally suffered the most, but I have got some severe bites on the hands too. The frost is so insidious that one very often gets bitten without knowing it. It is not generally the place that feels cold that is most liable to be caught but the place where you do not feel it at all. The severest nip I ever got was one day when working bare handed taking the nets out of the water. when the thick fleshy part of my left hand became as solid as a lump of ice, which I did not get properly thawed out until I returned home in the evening. It resembled a severe burn and did not get properly healed up until spring. It was quite late every day when we got home from our fishing grounds, so much so that our first duty was to pack away our fish we brought home, into snow, in the storehouse.

We would then go into the men's house where Mrs. Harcer would have a kettle of hot water ready for us to wash our nets which was immediately done and hung them up to dry, when we sat down to our meal of white fish. By this time it would be about nine or ten o'clock at night, so we turned into bed to take a nap until about four o'clock in the morning when the same routine had to be gone through. This work, as I have said, was kept up until the middle of February. By this winter

season of fishing we would have sufficient fish laid up in store to serve both men and dogs with provisions until the opening of navigation. The only difference between us and the dogs consisted rather in quantity than in quality. Our bill of fare was the same thing, the only difference being that a man got two whitefish a day, while each dog had only one, but both dogs and men were fed out of the same pile. The men at the post, therefore, had the luxury of two meals a day, while the dogs had only one. At that time, however, it did not seem to affect me very much, but now on looking back upon it I think that it was rather gruesome.

As I have said before, at the time I was at Beren's River I had a better opportunity of studying the Indian in his primitive state than at Norwey House, where they are mostly converted to the Christian faith The Indians at Beren's River were just as nature made them, but I will not class them as uncivilized, because I cannot truthfully apply the term to a people whom I had learned to revere for their sense of justice and truthfulness.

I remember that at one time there was a certain converted Indian missionary of the Methodist church came to Beren's river on one of his canoe trips from Beren's river. His name was Peter Jacobs. While at Beren's River he wished to have some talk with the Indians who were encamped on the other side of the river. As our master was an excellent Indian scholar and could speak the Indian language fluently. Mr. Jacobs invited Mr. Cummings to accompany him. He, knowing my desire to get acquainted with the Indian manners and customs, invited me to accompany them, which I was glad to do.

Accordingly the three of us took a canoe and went across the river to where the Indians were encamped to the number of I should say, about sixty or seventy adults about two hundred children and about six hundred dogs. Mr. Cmumings told the Indians that he had brought with him a man of their own Nation who wished to speak with them on the white man's religion, and begged them to give him a patient hearing, to which the Indians gave a grunt of assent. The Rev. Mr. Jacobs then began his oration by relating to them the account of the Noachin flood. His harangue lasted for some considerable time, the substance of which I, of course could not understand, not being versed in the Indian language, but I noticed Mr. Cummings smiling on several occasions.

It would appear from what I learned afterwards, that Mr. Jacobs himself had but a very imperfect knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and in consequence made some very serious blunders, one of which was that at the time of the flood Noah had four sons with him in the ark. The Indians, however, listened very attentively to his discourse and sat and smoked in silence. On our return Mr. Cummings ventured to ask Mr. Jacobs the name of Noah's fourth son, as he had forgotten it. Mr. Jacobs sat in thoughtful silence for some time trying to conjecture up in his brain the name required, till at length the truth seemed to dawn upon him that there were only three of them.

"Why," said he, "there were only three of them, what a fool I must be"

Mr. Cummings laughed at his mistake,

but Mr. Jacobs took the matter quite coolly saying that the Indians did not know but that he was right, and perhaps would never know to the contrary.

Coming towards spring in the latter part of March I was sent along with Mr. Harper to look after the Indians and find out what their winter's catch of furs amounted to. We went on snowshoes as usual and had two trains of four dogs in each train. Our route lay across Lake Winnipeg to the west side, passing up the little Saskatchewan and by Fairford up to Lake Manitoba, and all the surrounding country We were absent about three or four weeks and visited several encampments of Indian We found that the Indians had made a good hunt and there was a goodly supply among them of beaver, mink, marten, otter and both red and silver foxes, with a sprinkling of furs of lesser value, such as lynx, badger, wolverine and skunk. We took very few of these with us, as these were in the palmy days of the Hudson's Bay Company, there being no opposition trader in those days, and that being the case we were sure that every skin would be brought into the post when navigation opened so that the Indians could come in with their canoes.

On our return travelling was very heavy on account of the snow beginning to melt so that during the day when the sun began to get warm the snow was reduced to a watery slush which filled our snow shoes making them very hard to lift this kind of travelling is apt to produce what is called snow shoes nowshow sickness that is the sinews of the leg are apt to get cramped and gather up in a knot in the calves of the leg which is exceedingly painful. Another very annoying thing at this time of the year was snow blindness. Travelling all day with nothing but the glare of the sun upon the snow to look at tries the eyes very much, which is not felt much during the day, but when night comes, it is the very mischief. The suffering from that is something intense. I have been in a high fever with it, while I would roll in agony on the ground, with a feeling somehow that my eyes were full of hot burning sand.

On our return on this trip while in the middle of Lake Winnipeg we were overtaken by a terrific snowstorm. The wind blew fiercely and the snow was falling thickly, no land could be seen for we could not discern six yards ahead of us. Thus being exposed to the fury of the tempest without shelter and not knowing which way to proceed, for we had lost our reckoning, our only alternative was to let things take their course and follow the dogs to wherever they might lead us. We therefore let the dogs go ahead and without driving them let them find their way. Thus we travelled through the blinding storm all day, with an intense cold, which we did not mind much as we kept ourselves tolerably warm by walking. The storm kept up all day and now darkness was coming down upon us, and we could not help beginning to think that we were rather in a bad way. But just about dark we struck land but what land we could not tell, but we were glad to see it nevertheless. We got up into the bush and hastily gathered a few dry sticks and made a fire with flint tinder and steel; we had no matches in those days.

We cooked a whitefish each of us, and thawed out one for each of the dogs, and then gathered more wood and made a roar

ing fire, while we gathered some pine brush and made our bed in the snow and lay down to rest. After lying down I could not help musing on the events of the day we had gone through great peril, and we did not know where we were, but this did not alarm me as I knew that if the sky was clear we should know that on the morrow but I could not help thinking of my home in far off Scotland. What would my dear father and mother, brother and sisters think did they know the position I was in It was well they did not know. I had gone through perils on the briny deep, and now I found that there are cases of danger on land as well as on sea. On the morrow when we awakened up we found ourselves on the Birch Islands, about half way between the Little Saskatchewan River and Beren's River. The morning was clear and cold with very little wind, so we hitched up our dogs and started for home about two o'clock in the afternoon. I must confess I was thoroughly exhausted, my limbs were stiff from so much heavy snowshoe tramping and I was thoroughly snow blind. I had many trips on snawshoes before that but nevea such a hard one.

However, it is seldom that misfortunes come single and it was so in this case. No sooner than I began to recover from the ill effects of this voyage, than I caught a malignant fever and a sore throat, consequent I suppose, upon the severe fatigues I ha undergone. I was unable to swallow any nourishment, even it there was any to be had, but fish was the only thing available. Mr. Cummings, poor man, was at his wits end, and did not know what to do. The only medicine used in the service was Epsom Salts and I got a dose of it, but that id not seem to mend matters. I may here mention that the only medicine that came under my notice while in the service in the north, was Epsom Salts. It was administered on all occasions no matter what the disease might be. I was told, but I cannot vouch for the truih of it, that in some parts of the country if a man happened to cut his foot while chopping wood, a liberal dose of salts was administered.

In my case, however, the salts did no good, I lay in a state of great suffering unable either to speak or move until a happy thought struck Mr. Cummings and he straightway sent for Eate-ka-koo, the great medicine man among the Indians. He promptly came and on his entrance I could not help trying to laugh at the fellow sick as I was. He was perfectly devoid of clothing except a striped cotton shirt and a few feathers stuck in a band tied around his head.

However he came and stood over me as solemn as an owl and after having survey me for some time walked cut with a stately step and without saying a word to any body.

While revolving in my mind what was the meaning of this kind of acting, my worthy doctor re-entered having in his hand a small wooden mallet together with a small stick cleft at end, with a small chip of flint stuck in the cleft. He seized hold of my arm and proceeded to roll up my shirt sleeve. I now saw that he wanted to bleed me, but I was so weak I did not care euen if I saw him making preperations to cut my head off. Mr companion, Mr. Waters, however, made an effort to stop him, but Mr. Cummings told him to let the doctor go on; which he did. He, with one one hand set the piece of flint upon my arm, and then giving it a smart blow with

his little mallet the thing was done. The blood spurted out pretty freely, but for how long I could not tell as I fell over in a faint. On coming to myself I found the old Indian wrapping a bandage around my arm.

Whether my recovery was due to the treatment of the Indian I could not say but next day my throat was much better and I was able to swallow a little food. From that time I daily gained strength and was soon able to resume work again. I have had several attacks of quincy since then, but none so bad as this one.

Now being fairly ensconsed among the uncivilized Indians around the shores of Lake Winnipeg, I will endeavor to describe their mode of religion, their superstitions and social habits as they were to be seen there about forty years ago. The tribe of Indians that were under the surveillance of the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Beren's river, went under the name of Bungays, a name I have not heard of in any other part of the country. Their language was a sort of dialect between the Cree and the Chippewa; both sides being understood by them yet differing some what from either. At the time I am writing these Indians knew nothing whatever of of the Christian religion, they might have heard of it from their brethren at Norway House; but were utterly ignorant of its meaning. The Indians of Norway House who were converted to the Christian religion were mostly Crees, as I have said, a shade different from the Bungay's of Beren's river. We had hardly anything in common and did not have much inter course with each other, except it might be when the men worked together in the company's boats in going and returning from York Factory.

Their religion, not monotneistic by any means, for they had gods many and lords many. Of course there were two principal ones, namely Geeche Manitou, the Great Spirit, and Matche Manitou, the Evil Spirit; but there were a set of underlings, as it were, too numerous to mention for everything in nature almost, both animate and inanimate, had its presiding deity. Every kind of beast, bird and even fish had its attendant spirit. And then the four winds of heaven were so many spirits the sun, moon and stars, the clouds, lightning and thunder had each its spirit, all of which influenced the lives of the poor Indian. It may be well supposed that with such a multitude of divinities in their sacred catalogue, superstion would be rampart, which wrs the case. Many of these superstitions were no doubt sad to contemplate, while others of them were comical in the extreme.

With regard to the the two principal divinities, Geetche Manitou and Matche Manitou, the Indians worship the latter. According to tneir belief the Great Spirit is certainly the Supreme Ruler of all things, even over Matche Manitou, the Evil Spirit; but he is more particularly the tutelar deity of the white man and is too highly exalted to take any interest in the poor Indian. Furthermore he is the the personification of goodness itself, and will not willingly injure any poor Indian unless he wantonly tries to do harm to the white man.

This belief among the natives was a great factor in keeping the Indians from molesting the servants of the company in any way. During my residence at this

place I never had an angry word with an Indian in any way to seriously impair the friendly intercourse we had with each other. True, their greatest crime against us was in stealing a whitefish or two from us when we landed with our accustomed haul from the nets; but we never showed much anger against them for that. Poor creatures, when I think of that time now I think I would give them half of all I possessed, for I am apt to look back with a kind of mental regret for the pleasant times I spent among these unsophisticated children of nature.

But to return to their religious creed; Geeche Manitou being goodness itself, and consequently incapable of wilfully injuring either Indian or white man in any way, these people thought there really was no necessity in propitiating the favor of such a harmless being as that; therefore they set him aside as one from which they had nothing to fear. But Matche Manitou, the Evil Spirit, being being not an imp of the devil; but the devil himself was the object to be dreaded whose favor they ought to endeavor to obtain, and whose wrath they ought to conciliate to the best of their ability. But still, after all, according to their belief he was not such a malignant personage as our theologicans ometimes paint him. He could by repeated supplications and offerings be persuaded to do a good turn to his supplicants some time. Hence there was a kind of half friendly feeling towards his Satanic Majesty among the Indians which I can hardly blame them for. Even among the clergymen of my own loved Scottish home, a kind of sympathetic feeling is exhibited for his brimstone majesty. For instance a Scottish clergymen, in winding up his prayer, presented the following petition: "And noo, O Lord, if it be thy will, dae thou hae mercy on the puir deil, an' a' the praise and glory shall be thine, Amen." On another occasion a Scotch parson, in the course of his sermon, made the following remark, "Nae doot the word deevil may be the proper English; but I mysel' prefer calling him the deil, it soonds mair freendly like."

With such examples before us we can not blame the poor Indians very much for their affectionate feeling for the Prince of Darkness.

The next duty of importance in Indian mythology is Wesse-ke-jack, a sort of gentleman foreman god, whose business seems to have been to superintend and direct the work of creation and overseeing things in general afterwards.

In the work of creation having first made the trees and herbs of the field, next turned his hand to make all the animals, reptiles, fowl and fish; but at that time there was a great scarcity of light upon the earth, the sun at that time being only an occasional visitor to this globe. Anxious to keep the sun from wandering way on his next approach to the earth Wesse-ke-jack set an enormous trap to catch the sun, something like a gigantic bear trap. This accomplished the desired end, for the very next time the sun came near the earth, he got caught in the trap In vain the sun struggled to get free; the cords by which he was held were too strong for him. But the near proximity of the sun to the earth and its inhabitants the heat of the sun being so great that everything animate or inanimate was in

danger of being scorched. The spirit of the sun knew nothing of this, however, therefore Weese-ke-jack concluded to endeavor to drive some sort of a compromise with the sun, before he would consent to give him his liberty. After a long confabulation between Weese-ke-jack and the spirit of the sun, whose name was Ane-ne-kee, it was stipulated that the sun was only to come near the outer edges of the earth in the mornings and the evenings and during the day to keep at a respectful distance just near enough to warm the earth without scorching it. On the other hand Kee-wa-tin, the spirit of the North wind was ordered by Weese-ke-jack to keep at a respectful distance from the sun when the days were long, so as not to counteract the effects of the beneficial warmth of the sun. But during the short days of the year, Kee-wa-tin was permitted to blow upon the earth and bring snow and ice in its train so that the bear, frogs and so forth might enjoy their winter sleep without molestation. On these conditions mutually agreed upon, the sun was to get his liberty.

But now another difficulty presented itself. The sun had not the power to unloose the bands by which he was held and the heat emanating from him prevented either Weese-ke-jack or any of the creatures of his creation to approach the sun to cut his bands and set him free. Weese ke jack made a proclamation among his creatures that any of them that would set the sun free would receive particular favors from high quarters.

The beaver at that time was a sort of insignificant fellow not much thought of by the rest of the animal world having only a few small teeth in his head and having hardly any caudal appendage like the rest of the animals, his tail being only a small stump about two or three inches long. Yet withal he was about as conceited as a Dutch Editor, but blessed with a little more brains. He therefore walked boldly up to headquarters and offered his services to release the sun. At first Weese ke jack looked upon the beaver with the same misgivings that Saul looked on David when he offered to go and fight the Philistine, but being assured by Mr. Beaver that he would perform the task, he was permitted to go. The beaver set off at full trot and succeeded in gnawing through the cords that held the sun before being quite roasted alive. The cords being cut the sun arose majestically from the earth like a vast balloon when the ropes that attaches it the earth are let go.

But was not the poor beaver a pitiful sight when he presented himself to Weese ke jack on his return? His teeth were burnt away so that only two or three blackened stumps remained; his hair, which formerly resembled that of the swine was burned off leaving only his blackened skin. Altogether he was an object of pity. But Weese ke jack in gratitude for his deliverance from the burning rays of the sun, proceeded to reward Mr. Beaver in a princely manner. He, in place of the rough hairy coat he had previously, was clothed by Weese ke jack with a beautiful soft coat of fur which was the envy of all the other animals; and to compensate for the loss of his teeth, he was furnished with a new set broad and sharp admirably fitted to cut down trees for building purposes. But in order that it should be kept in remembrance whence he derived these favors, his teeth were

made of a brown color as if they had been scorched by the fire. And this is how the beaver came by his hatchet like teeth and furry coat.

Wesse-ke-jaak having thus settled the sun, and the general temperature of the earth, now proceeded to make man. In order that man might be made good and strong, Wesse-ke-jaak concluded to make him of stone. Having picked out a rock that suited his purpose he spent many days in hewing out the figure he wished to make, the stone being very hard and his tools none of the best. After working for a long time, however, he managed to get the figure of a man made that suited his purpose. Wesse-ke-jaak was so proud of his workmanship that he, after setting his man of stone upon his feet, before putting life into him, walked backwards a considerable distance to see how his man would look from a remote point of view. When he had thus walked a goodly distance from his object of admiration; he stood gazing for a long time in silent contemplation and satisfaction with the complete job he had accomplished. But, while thus employed a malicious bear happened to peep out of his hole, espied the figure as it stood in all its grandeur. Filled with envy, he rushed up to the newly made man and, like a pig against a stone wall, began to root viciously against the model man. The consequence was that before Wesse-ke-jaak could interfere, Mr. Bruin had knocked the man over, who, falling upon the hard rock, broke into a hundred pieces.

Wesse-ke-jaak was terribly enraged that by this untoward accident his great work was thus destroyed. For a time he could neither eat nor sleep, being so much grieved at the disastrous end of his many months of work had come to. However he determined to make another attempt to make a man; but concluded not to spend so much time over it this time. He set to work to make one of clay, and in a little time had one nicely made which after setting in a secluded place, left it to dry in the sun. This being done satisfactorily he forthwith endued him with life and thus we have man as he is at the present day but the Indians still lament the untoward accident by which the man of stone was destroyed as had Wesse-ke-jaak succeeded in putting life in the man of stone the human family would have been ten times stronger than they are now.

But in process of time Wesse-ke-jaak found that he had an unruly family to deal with. All the creatures of creation began to prey upon each other. Loud complaints were made against the fox because he attacked the birds and killed them; the fish complained against the otter for the same thing; while the bear set up a dismal groaning because the winter was so long he could get no berries to eat. But the greatest complaint was made against man because he ate everything that came in his way; beasts, fowl, fish and berries were all devoured by this creature of creation. The clamour of all these parties became so great that Wesse-ke-jaak determined to call a general council to see whether as it were, he could not bring order out of chaos and reach some agreement by which all these grievances would be remedied. Accordingly a general proclamation was issued summoning all the spirits of the various living creatures before him at a certain date.

When the time arrived there was a general mixed multitude convened which proved

to be a very unruly set. The noise and confusion was something terrible, which Wesse ke jaak with all his skill could not control. In vain he tried to get the crowd to keep still and listen to reason, there was no end to the continued noise they were making.

Wesse ke jaak finally lost his temper and became very wrathy. The most noisy one in the crowd was the frog, who in spite of all that could be done kept up an incessant chattering and croaking. Wesse ke jaak was so enraged at the cheek of Mr. Frog that seizing hold of a glue pot that stood near he took a brushful of the glue and dashed it over the mouth of the frog with the hope of stopping his chattering forever. But this was of no avail, the frog blew the glue out, but part of it remained around the corners of his mouth, which is the cause of the white streak around the corners of his mouth to this day.

But nothing could be done to allay the storm and tumult of this convention. Wesse ke jaak, therefore, dismissed them all, vowing vengeance on the whole pack of them.

His next exploit, therefore, was to build an immense canoe, into which he took a pair of every kind of living creatures, intending to drown all the rest. Accordingly when he had got all his cargo on board, he himself stepped into the canoe and forthwith the whole earth sunk beneath the water, causing the death of all living creatures with the exception of those who were with Wesse ke jaak in the canoe.

This state of affairs continued for some time, Wesse ke jaak with his living freight went cruising about on the waste of waters for many a long day, until at last he became tired of that kind of life and forthwith decided to make a new earth. But in order to do so he must have something to make it of. He therefore commissioned the otter to go down into the waters and bring him up some mud so that he might make a new earth. But once the otter got back into his native element and finding fish plentiful he never returned to his master with the mud.

Wesse kejaak finding that the otter did not return, sent Mr. Muskrat down to bring him some mud. Now at that time the muskrats tail was very short and insignificant, being only a small affair. Mr. Muskrat went down as directed, and gathered a goodly armful of mud and straightway came to the surface of the water, but then Wesse ke jaak put forth his hand to take the mud, the muskrat with a twinkle in his eye and a roguish smile on his face, as much as to say, "Catch me if you can," made a swift turn and dived under the water. Wesse ke jaak made a grab for his ratship but only succeeded in catching his stump of a tail which stretched out and slipped through his hand, and the rat got away. But since that time the rat has had a long thin tail which is neither useful nor ornamental.

Wesse ke jaak being thus thwarted twice was highly indignant and threatened all sorts of vengeance against the otter and muskrat. Having cooled down a little he asked the beaver to go and get him some mud. Accordingly the beaver went down to the bottom and brought from there quite a large handful of mud, which he handed gracefully to his master, who was quite delighted and straightway made a new earth. Everything being finished he caused the living part of his cargo to land

and enjoy themselves as best they could. But he did not forget Mr. Beaver for his services. He, instead of the stump of a tail he had formerly, received a broad flat trowel like tail by which he was enabled to plaster his house. Thus the beaver for his accomodating nature received a beautiful coat of fur, teeth sharp as an axe for cutting down trees to build his house and a tail like a trowel with which he could plaster his house.

And here I may mention that I once had the pleasure of witnessing a company of beavers at work building a winter habitation for themselves. It was a sight never to be forgotten, but I am glad that I saw it once in my lifetime and now I never expect to see the like again.

Knowing my anxiety to see the strange and wonderful things continually happening in this country, Mr. Harper, son-in-law of Mr. Cummings invited me out to see the beavers building their home. It was a calm and still evening in the fall of the year that we started out and took up our position on the bank of a creek nearly opposite the place where the beavers had commenced to build their house. We lay down prone on the earth in a position where we could just peep over the bank where the works were going on. Of course we had to keep perfectly still, for these creatures have sentinels set at different points and at the least noise a certain signal is given and the whole body of them will disappear under the water in an instant.

A little before dark the whole troop suddenly emerged out of the water and commenced working. And, first I must mention the leader or overseer who seemed to direct the work, which personage walked up and down the bank of the creek, where the company were at work. He carried a small stick in his mouth about a foot long, which I took to be his wand of office. I do not know in what way he communicated his wishes as I do not recollect the beaver having a vocal sound, if there was such it has escaped my memory although I remember perfectly well how regularly the work was carried on. Some of them were engaged on the bank of the creek cutting down small poplars and willows, some were at work stripping off the branches and some were hauling the sticks and willows down to the water, while others were piling the material into a dyke in order to form a dam. It was amusing to see these builders come up out of the water between their fore paws, which they would deposit on the dyke and then turn around and plaster it smooth with a few flaps of their tails.

The houses of these animals are built on the land which are formed by digging out the soft mud or clay not far from the edge of the water. Their dwelling proper is divided off into several chambers, while near these chambers is a large room used as a storehouse, into which are safely stowed away the young buds of the white poplar which form their winter store of food. Leading from these chambers to the water a deep trench is dug in order that free excess may be had to the water all winter. The dam which they build is intended to keep a sufficient depth of water during the winter, without danger of being frozen to the bottom. All these chambers and passage ways are artfully covered over with willows and brush that it takes an experienced eye to find a beaver

dwelling in the winter met. The general plan of the Indian is to watch in the fall of the year where the beaver builds his house and mark the spot. Even then the Indians are sometimes deceived in locating the place in the winter.

I was told by the Indians that the passage ways bteween the chambers and the water must be kept open at all hazards and to attain this end one of their number by turns is kept walking backwards and forwards between the houses and the water to keep the way from being frozen up.

To capture a colony of these animals in the spring before the thaw, when the fur is good, requires the greatest care on the part of the Indian. He must proceed with the utmost caution, and endeavor to stop the passage to the water, and this is no easy task, as at the least suspicious noise about their dwelling the whole body of them take to the water. Often has an Indian found to his sorrow that after all trouble in breaking through the roof of the passage, all the colony had fled and left him nothing but an empty house. But when one is lucky enough to get the passage way blocked up, before the creatures are alarmed he is often rewarded by a rich find. All that remains for him to do then is to uncover the roof of the house sufficiently to spear the inmates, much in the same manner is fish is speared.

While speaking of the Indians, their habits and mythology, I may make mention of one of their festivals at which I had the good fortune to be present.

The festival is usually held in the spring of the year. It is, I was led to understand the most important of all their religious ceremonies. Their code of religious duties are contained in the precepts laid down by the chief master of ceremonies. It is a sort of secret society, which has lodges all over the country from Lake Superior to the far north.

The name of the feast is "Metawin" or "feast of long life." The head centre lodge or tent was established in the east by some of the Divinities, I was not able to learn which, but its sole purpose was to insure long life to all those Indians who obey its behests, and grants remission of sins to all Indians who follow its precepts The centre lodge still remains in the east, but its exact locality cannot now be found but on account of the migration of the Indians, they received power and instructions to establish subordinate lodges.

The first subordinate lodge was established, it is said by medicine men, somewhere in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg five or six hundred years ago. Its mysteries were ordered to be performed every alternate year forever. And from this lodge established at Lake Superior the several tribes of Indians in North America received their power to institute branch lodges.

Each lodge had its Grand Master of medicine, a Master of Ceremonies, and other minor officers. Each member of the lodge had in possession the bag of life. This bag consisted of the skin of a certain bird or animal, such as the skin of an owl, mink, beaver or muskrat. Sometimes they were made of the skins of snakes, in fact almost any kind of small skin was used.

These bags of life were highly ornamented with beads or porcupine quills, and

contained medicine of the most select kind.

The form of the Metawin tent of life was thus: It was built long and narrow, with its doors, in all cases, facing the east and south, and carefully covered with leaves so close that the eye of the outside observer could not see into it's myster ies, and thus pollute it's sacred precincts.

Through the intercession of Mr. Cum mings and a liberal quantity of tobacco, tea and sugar from myself I was permitted to enter this sacred place. The chief who was my conductor led me into the tent, into which we were no sooner entered than we were saluted with the beating of drums and a salutation which sounded something like, ne kan, kan nah, ka na nah.

The chief led me to the centre of the tent, where stood the wooden images of the goose, the duck, the fox and some other deities which I did not at that time notice Here I was told to deposit my offerings of tobacco, tea and sugar, which I did amid the tom tom of the drum and several excla mations of approval from the Indians.

I must confess that at the time I had serious misgivings in my mind whether I was not committing a sin by making an offering unto idols, but as I did not intend it as an act of worship, but merely did so in pursuit of knowledge, my conscience was quieted on that occasion.

After this ceremony was performed. I was sat down at the end of the tent near where the chief men were assembled, when I was treated to a dish of boiled sturgeon which I accepted, being very glad it was sturgeon instead of boiled dog, of which I saw plenty around me.

It is the greatest affront one can offer to an Indian to refuse to eat what he sets be ore one, and therefore in such a case it may be readily understood that I was glad to get a dish of sturgeon set before me, rath er than a hash of boiled dog.

The ceremony of my reception and par taking of the food offered me being over I now had leisure to look around me and see where I was and what my surround ings were. As I have said before the tent was long and somewhat narrow, with several poles stuck in a straight line down the centre, which supported a cord on which were suspended the offerings made by those penitent sinners who came to obtain pardon for their misdeeds, as also the offerings of those who had made a good hunt during the past winter, and those who had recovered from some sick ness. These offerings consisted of vari- ous articles, such as pieces of printed calico, clothing guns, knives, ammunition and other things. At the foot of each pole were placed roughly made wooden images of various birds and animals while at the head of the tent where the chief men sat was a sort of image representing a human form partly of wood and partly of clothing which I was informed was the god of medi cine. The spectators were seated close around the sides of the tent, sufficient space being left between the assembly and the line of tent poles in the centre to allow those who performed their religious rites to march around, which was done in a sort of half walk, half run and part dance and uttering a monotous chant while the drum at the end of the tent kept up a continual tom tom.

The origin of this peculiar kind of wor ship, according to Indian tradition is as follows. Geeche Manitou, or the Great

Spirit, revealed these mysterious ceremonies to man shortly after his creation, about the time the first pair had grand children born to them, and before death entered in to the world.

At that time there lived two powerful snakes who had existed from the beginning of the world—the rattlesnake and the natawa, They lived together in harmony for many years, but at length the rattlesnake grew jealous of the powerful and deadly natawa, which envy so increased that the rattlesnake challenged the natawa to try which of them possessed the most deadly poison by inflicting a bite on mankind, The natawa demurred at first not being willing to disturb the harmony and peace that existed in the world, but from day to day the rattlesnake so taunted him with cowardice that the good natured natawa consented to accept the challenge

At that period there lived two powerful chieftains near to each other who were on great terms of intimacy. They had each a son grown up to manhood who loved each other sincerely, and often used to hunt in the woods together. During one of these rambles it came to pass that the rattlesnake and natawa waylaid them for the purpose of inflicting a wound on each to see which of their poisons were the most deadly. The young men, unconscious of danger happened to pass the thicket where the two snakes were in ambush, when all of a sudden the two reptiles sprang upon them and gave each of them a sting. The young man who was bitten by the natawa instantly dropped dead from the effects of the poison while the other had time to run to his father's tent, which when he had reached a noted medicine man appliyd a powe ful antidote to the wound, and he recovered in a few days.

After the deed was done the natawa snake was grieved and enraged with the rattlesnake, by whose guile and temptation he had been instrumental in bringing death and sorrow to mankind.

"Brother," said the natawa to the rattle snake, "You have been the cause of bringing death and misery to mankind by your envious and evil designs, therefore you shall ever after this have a rattle in your tail to warn every being who approaches you of your hateful presence, and the human race shall pursue you to death."

The old chieftain, whose son had died of poison, brou ht the body home and with his tribe performed the burial ceremony Every day the old chieftain repaired to the grave of his beloved son and mourned his loss bitterly. The friends of the old man endeavored to console him in his grief, but without effect, he would not even speak to them

During one of his daily visits to the grave of his son, he saw an enormous snake striped with various colors like a rainbow, ascending out of the earth, who thus addressed him, "Old man of the plain, I command you to appear at this spot on the third day following this, and you must implicitly follow my directions and obey my commands. Then shall appear to you a snake on this very same spot, he will be sent by the gods. You will elevate the serpent three times by the horns, and at each time you elevate or raise him up, you shall repeat the words of adorarion to the snake by saying, ne kan, ne kan, kan, na, ka, ka, nah. Oh! oh! oh! Immediately after you have performed the

ceremony with the snake, there shall appear to you a Manitou of your race, who will teach you the ceremony of the metawin or the tent of life, and reveal to you the mysterious rites which come from the happy hunting grounds, and from the centre of the earth and from the depths of the waters. The spirits take pity on your sorrows and will help you if you obey them Adieu my son, you will point to the centre of the heavens, the centre of the earth and to the four abodes of the spirits with your pipe stem, whilst I glide down the perpendicular rock of our abodes."

At that instant the snake disappeared downwards with a tremendous hissing sound, caused presumably by the rapidity of his decent.

According to the instructions of the great snake the old man repaired to the grave of his son on the third day, and after presenting his pipe stem to the centre of the sky and the earth and the four winds, presented the offerings of the dead, then sat down facing the body of his son, who, according to Indian custom, was placed in the grave in a sitting posture with his face towards the east. At that instant he heard a rumbling noise, and lol an enormous serpent appeared before him, having two horns and whose jaws contained two rows of large teeth.

The serpent lay down and twisted itself into a circle around the grave. The old chidftain arose from his seat and took the serpent by the horns and elevated it three times, at each time repeating the magic words, "Ne kan, kan nah, ka, ka, nah." At the third time the serpent changed it's shape into that of a venerable old man with white hair, having a wand or rattle in his hand, together with the fire bag of life, and of the skin of the deadly natawa which contained the magic bead, he thus addressed the old chieftain.

"I have come to comfort and console you for the death of your son. The spirits of the earth wind and water have seen your sorrow and I am sent to your race to show you the way of life, which you will teach, to your children, and which shall continue to the end of time. Now therefore light your pipe and with your stem point to the sky, the abode of the great Spirit who shall give you life, to the abodes of the spirits of the centre of the earth whose will is to teach you the virtues of all herbs, and to the four winds who will protect you and give you power and success."

After the old chieftain had completed of pointing with his pipe stem to the sky, earth and air, he offered his ghostly visitor the pipe, but the old man raised his wand and touched the mouth piebe, when immediately was heard the tapping of a drum. After three knocks of this mysterious sound the old man commenced to repeat the following. ne kanis, ne kanis, kan nah. na ka nah. He then chanted the following song:

I come from the East,
Where the long tent does rest,
The Great Spirit does say,
Peform these rites alway.

After chanting this medicine song for some time the old man sat down near the chieftain and taught him the ceremonies and rites of the long tent of life which occupied some days, the Indians say that the moon changed once during the time that the old chieftain was receiving his instructions in all the secrets of the tent of

After chanting this medicine song for some time, the old man sat down near the chieftain and taught him the ceremonies and rites of the long tent of life which occupied some days, the Indians say that the moon changed once during the time that the old chieftain was receiving his instructions in all the secrets of the tent of life. After the old chieftain had been fully instructed his preceptor said.

"I will bless you with long life and you shall have more sons, but forget not my instructions. I leave you this bag of natawa skin with the magic bead and this wand. Beware, pollute not my tent of life Adieu, my son. I go hence, but I shall hear you when you chant the mysteries I have taught you." Saying this the white haired spiritual visitor vanished from the the gaze of the old chieftain.

After some months when the old chieftain's mourning was over and after celebrating a feast with his tribe, he commanded that all the males should purify him and assist him in building the long tent of life. During the evenings he employed himself in teaching the males of his tribe to sing the mysteries imparted to him by his spiritual teacher, and after having succeeded in giving them sufficient knowledge in all the rites and ceremonies pertaining to the tent of life, he appointed all the various officers of the tent, but he himself was Grand Master.

During this time, which took several years to accomplish, the old chief was gladdened by having a son born to him, the very image of the one who died by the sting of the natawa.

The forgoing is the account of the origin of the feast of the natawa, or feast of long life as related to me by the Indian called Bear, through the interpretation of Mr. Cummings, and now I shall endeavor to give a description of the ceremonies I saw them perform at the feast I was permitted to be present at.

The Grand Master, in giving notice of the meeting, sends a portion of tobacco to all the members of the lodge with a request to meet at a certain time and place to celebrate the festival of the natawa, or long tent of life, which generally takes place about the spring of the year, or in the summer season.

In the first place, after meeting, the tent is erected in the form I have described This being done, the Grand Master and Master of Ceremonies collect all the members and approach the tent on the east side and then march around it three times following the course of the sun. At the third time around the Grand Master halts opposite the entrance and advances three times, esssaying to enter and three times retreats, meanwhile singing as follows:—

"I approach but fear
To be near thy presence,
Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!

A he finishes this chant the Director of Ceremonies, with his wand lifts up the door, and the Grand Master enters followed by all the members. He then chants as follows:—

I have entered, I have entered,
Long life to gain, long life to gain,
Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!

Then they march around the inside of the tent three times, each in the costumes of their order, and each having in his

hand his skin bag and magic bead. The members then each take the seat allotted to them by the Director of Ceremonies, while the Grand Master takes his stand near the image of the god of medicine with the drum and knocker in his hands. He taps the drum three times, at each interval repeating the words, "ne kan, ne kan kan na na, ka na nah." He then proceed to address the company in somewhat the following strains:—

"The Great Spirit who dwelleth in the heaven of heavens, bless you all and send you long life. The white haired man bring with him life, and has given me life, which I give to all my brothers and sisters. Our forefathers left us this tent to teach our children and your life depends upon the secrets of your own breasts. Prepare your magic beads and medicine skins of the tent of life, to cast your beads on the sick and dying men who may be placed before you to restore life. Your magic beads shall pierce the rocks, the spirits who preside over our secret councils shall bless your efforts to restore health and long life The path of our ancestors teaching us the use of the countless herbs and roots growing in this our world will sing the song of enchantment when each member will offer with gratitude to his teacher, the offerings he may have brought with him to seek and receive long life.

The Grand Master having finished his speech several other of the leading members addressed the meeting, and it seemed remarkable to me to notice with what ease and fluency these Indians spoke. There seemed to be no hesitation, no pause to think of a word and no stammering in any way. There words seemed to roll in as fast as the speaker could utter them. The tenor of the speeches were about the same which was to obey their superiors and use the medicines to be found in the world.

The speeches being now ended, the members of the lodge marched around the tent several times swinging their medicine bags and uttering a monotonous chant, while the drum was kept constantly on the tom tom.

The candidates for admission into the secrets of the lodge, the preperation of whom I shall speak hereafter, and were seated along with the women and children who were seated along the sides of the tent, while the procession was going around in a sort of jog trot dance: Suddenly the procession would come to a halt opposite one of the candidates. The Chief Medicine Man would mutter something to the candidate and then throw his medicine bag at him, whereupon the candidate would suddenly drop down as if he had been shot. The medicine men then would gather around in a kneeling posture and blow into his ears and mouth and shake their medicine bags over him, making at the same time a sort of rumbling noise. In a short time the candidate would open his eyes and and gradually come to life, as it were, and in a short time was fully recovered, the march would be resumed and the slain man would grasp his medicine bag and follow the procession. The ceremony was again repeated, until all the candidates were disposed of.

After the ceremony of admitting candidates is disposed of they begin another, which consists of each medicine man holding a bead in his hand and going around showing it to each of the company. He then falls upon his knees and pretends to swallow it. The medicine men claim that

this bead is supernaturally drawn from their bodies and replaced in their medicine bags without either having seen or touched them. After this rite has been gone through, the several offerings contributed are taken down and handed to the newly initiated candidates who in their turn distribute them among the different medicine men; this division is, however, not done arbitrarily, as the offerings are divided according to provision made previously in a secret conclave held a short time before This being done, the medicine men again march around the tent at a half trot and point their medicine bags occasionally at each other, the party pointed at immediately falls down as if struck by lightning, but soon recovers, gets up and follows the crowd. On some occasions one seems as if badly wounded and unable to get up, in such cases the others gather around him and after much ceremony make a show of extracting a bead from his body. This ceremony was to me very amusing on account of the effect the pointing of a medicine bag had upon one. If it was pointed at the body the victim suddenly fell down motionless where he lay exactly as if dead until the medicine men gathered around him and by various manipulations brought him to life again. When the medicine bag was pointed at one's knee he would instantly become lame and would with great difficulty hobble after the procession, but after a little while he would gradually get better and finally resume his wonted jog trot with the rest.

Most of the women and children were seated around the inside of the tent, with the exception of those who were employed in cooking outside and they were not a few as there was seemingly no cessation in eating. Some of the women were going to and from the nets which were set in the river for sturgeon. No sooner was a sturgeon caught than it was brought ashore and cooked immediately.

There also seemed to be a law that any dog who had the temerity to enter into the sacred tent was immediately killed, skinned and boiled forthwith. As there were plenty of dogs around there were quite a few thus sacrificed.

Several dishes full of dog broth and dog meat as well as sturgeon were set before the several wooden images in the tent which were all divided amongst the medicine men when the feast was over.

About six o'clock in the evening the ceremony was ended and I returned to the fort. There was a great deal of juggling in these ceremonies, which although some of it may be classed as very strange yet I had no thought but that the whole performance which seemed so strange was done no doubt by sleight of hand. Mr. Harper and his wife, however, stoutly maintained that there were supernatural agencies at work during the ceremonies, but on that point I am still sceptical.

Shortly after this time that the feast was held I was told that an Indian conjuror named the Bear, was to conjure one evening, and of course I was anxious to see the ceremony. Mr. Cummings, who had some belief that the imitation of the matawin tent were aided by something not of this earth, asked me to come with him assuring me that however unbeheving I might be with regard to the tent of long life, yet at the conjuring tent I would be convinced that there was no doubt but that the supernatural had a hand in the performance.

On the apointed evening Mr. Cummings

and his wife and myself started of to the place where the conjuror was to perform. Mr Cummings said that we would go a little early in order that I might have time to examine the premises before the performances commenced.

On arriving at the grounds I saw that the tent was erected by driving several sticks or poles in the ground in a circle. These poles were drawn together at the top by means of a line made of buffalo skin, called shaguappi. The tent was then covered with dressed buffalo skins tied firmly on with the same aforesaid "shaguappi," leaving a small aperture at the bottom for the convenience of the conjuror in entering into the tent.

Now this man Bear, the conjuror was a decrepit old man, who had been poisoned by some of his tribe, whereby the skin of his hands was a complete mass of sores, and his finger nails about dropping off. This habit of the Indians in poisoning one another shall be related further on.

About sunset Mr. Bear made preparations to enter his tent, but before doing so I was permitted to examine the inside to see that the Bear was the only one domiciled therein. After this the Bear entered and closed the door behind him. Immediately after this the the tent began to sway backwards and forwards while gradually was heard several voices speaking in the tent. This was explained to me as the several spirits who entered the tent, such as the spirits of the fox, the goose, the crane, and the north wind and so forth. the entrance of each spirit was marked by a thump, as if some heavy body fell on the ground. Meanwhile the tent kept swaying from one side to the other continually while an incessant chattering of talk was kept up. This lasted the whole night without intermission, which seemed very wonderful to me, I could hardly believe that there was anything of the supernatural in these operations, and yet there were some things In could not comprehend. I could not account for the swaying of the tent all night, I could hardly believe that Bear, whose hands were in such a putrefied state and who was an old man weak in body could sway a tent like that continually without cessation. He might imitate the various sounds I heard, which in itself was barely possible, but the moving of the tent to me was inexplicable.

Through the interpretation of Mr. Cummings, who was an excellent Indian scholar, I had an interview with the conjuror Bear, and questioned him pretty closely as to what he knew of the science of conjuring. He told me that in order to be a conjuror one must go through a certain ceremony, and be initiated in a regular manner, part of which ceremonies consisted of fasting for a considerable length of time, and paying particular attention to dreams and other signs. It is the usual custom for a novice to begin the discipline he must undergo in order to become a conjuror, to erect a sleeping stage up among the thick branches of the trees and after fasting to retire ther to sleep. Whether waking or sleeping he could not tell, but in such a case he was visited by spirits who gave him directions what to do and also gave him the power of calling spirits to the conjuring tent. Bear told me that these were about the most of the ceremonies he was permitted to make known, the great bulk of them being secret and on no account to be made known.

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